WAR TO THE KNIFE

ROLF BOLDREWOOD

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"WAR TO THE KNIFE"

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OR

TANGATA MAORI

BY

ROLF BOLDREWOOD

AUTHOR OF

"ROBBERY UNDER ARMS," ETC.

London

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CHAPTER I

MASSINGER COURT in Herefordshire was a grand old Tudor mansion, the brown sandstone walls and tiled roofs of which had been a source of pride to the inhabitants of the county for untold generations. Standing in a fair estate of ten thousand acres, three roods, and twenty-eight perches (to be accurate), with a nominal rental of somewhat over fifteen thousand a year, it might be thought that for the needs of an unmarried man of eight and twenty there was "ample room and verge enough."

Beside the honour and glory of being Massinger of Massinger, and inhabiting "The Court," the erstwhile residence of a royal princess, with its priceless heirlooms and memories!

Many a newly enriched proprietor would have given his eyes to have possessed them by hereditary right.

For, consider, what a place, what a possession, it was!

Thus, many a maid, many a matron of the town and county, had often reflected in appraising the matrimonial value of the eligible suitors of the neighbourhood.

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Think of the grand hall, sixty feet in length, twenty-six in width, extending to the roof with its fine old oaken rafters and queer post trusses! Think of the floor of polished oak, the walls with their priceless oak panelling, with carved frieze and moulded cornice; the mullioned windows, with arched openings giving light to King Edward's corridor on the first floor, carried across one corner of the hall by the angle gallery!

Then—glory of glories!—the bay, ten feet wide and nine deep, with windows glazed in lead squares, and extending to the springing of the roof.

Here was a place to sit and dream, while gazing over the park, in the glowing yet tender light of an early summer morn, the while the châtelaine tripped down the broad oaken staircase at the opposite end of the hall, with its carved grotesque-headed newels.

Boudoir and billiard-room, dining and drawing-room, library and morning-room, were they not all there, admirably proportioned, in addition to a score of other needful, not to say luxurious, apartments?

Thus much for the domestic demesne, the suzerainty of which is dear to every woman's heart.

From a man's point of view—at Massinger Moor were the head keeper's lodge and kennels; these last slated, with iron caged runs, stone-paved, iron-doored, complete.

The river Teme is famed for excellent trout-fishing. Salmon also are not unknown in the water. But, in this connection be it known, that for centuries past the lords of the manor have permitted the townspeople to fly-fish (for trout only) in that length of the river below the bridge.

"And then, her heritage, it goes
Along the banks of Tame ;
In meadows deep the heifer lows,
The falconer and woodsman knows
Her thickets for the game."

As much as this might be said for the woods and coverts of "The Court," since that old time when "the forest laws were sharp and stern," and the Conqueror stood no nonsense where "the tall deer that he loved as his own children" were concerned.

The descendants of these well-beloved and interesting animals were by no means scarce in "The Chase," which was still jealously preserved for them as of old.

The North Herefordshire hounds met three days a week, the Milverton hounds two days, the Ledbury were only just across the boundary, while, for fear the squire and his visitors might feel a *soupçon* of ennui in the season, the South Boulton harriers are available, and, to fill up any conceivable chink, the Dunster otter-hounds were within easy reach.

Thus, man's every earthly need being provided for, his spiritual welfare was by no means forgotten.

In the parish church, as was befitting in days of old, before the doctrine of equality and the "flat burglary" of democracy were so much as named, was reserved for the lords of Massinger and their assigns, by sale or lease, the whole of the south aisle and chapel. And as the church was within five minutes' walk of the Court, all pedestrian fatigue, as well as the indecency of taking out carriages and horses on the Sabbath, was avoided.

Now, from an earthly paradise like this, why should the lawful owner, young, good-looking, cultured,

athletic, think for one moment of fleeing to the desert, socially, and no doubt literally, of a distant, almost unknown British colony?

Was there an angel with a flaming sword? If so, she was typified in the guise of Hypatia Tollemache. Was she mad?

Must be. He, of course, utterly moonstruck, inasmuch as there is well known to be throughout all England a sufficiency of marriageable damsels—even, as some have averred, a redundancy of that desirable national product. If the county had been polled, they would have voted for a *de lunatico inquirendo*.

Was there a hidden reason? There could not be.

He was not rich, but Massinger had stood many an extravagant squire in the old days without losing the estate which had come down from father to son since the Conquest, and would again so continue to descend, with a prudent marriage in aid of rent and relief of mortgages.

But there was a reason besides what lay on the surface, and the old family lawyer, Mr. Nourse, of Nourse and Lympett, knew it well. More than a hundred years ago there had been a sudden-appearing re-incarnation of one of the most reckless spendthrifts —and there had been more than one in the annals of the family—that had ever scandalized the county, frightened the villagers, and wasted like water the revenues which should have kept up the ancient traditions of the house.

Rainauld de Massinger had the misfortune to be a living anachronism. Born out of due time, he was at odds with the age and the circumstances amidst which his lot had been cast. Despising the un-

lettered squirearchy of his day, and the nearly as uncongenial nobility of the county, he threw himself with ardour into the semi-scientific, wholly visionary studies which, under the name of astrology, amused the leisure of those personages who could not content themselves with the dull round of duties and coarse dissipations which the manners of the age prescribed. He constructed a laboratory in one of the turret-rooms, which only he and his confidential servant, a grave, silent Italian, were suffered to enter. From time to time mysterious strangers of foreign habit and alien language arrived at Massinger, and were entertained with every mark of high respect. The villagers spoke with awe of midnight fires in the turret-room, of the strange sounds, the evil-smelling fumes thence proceeding, with other innovations proper in their untutored fancies to the occupation of a sorcerer. Seldom did he visit the Court, and when at rare intervals his tall figure and dark saturnine face were remarked in the throng of nobles, they inspired dislike or distrust more than kindly sentiment. Not that such feelings were openly displayed. For he had brought back from his travels in the East, and the far countries in which he had spent his early manhood, a reputation for swordsmanship which caused even the reckless gallants of the day to pause ere they lightly aroused the ire of one who was known to hold so cheaply his own life and that of others.

It was known that he had fought as a volunteer in the long Roumanian war with the Turks, in which it was popularly reported that he bore a charmed life ; such had been his almost incredible daring, such had been the miraculous escapes from captivity and torture.

And yet, all suddenly relinquishing a career which promised unusual brilliancy in court and camp, he had for years shut himself up in the old hall at Massinger, devoting himself to those unblessed studies which had excited the distrust of his neighbours, the displeasure of the Church, the cynical wonder of his peers.

Departing with his usual eccentricity from the course which he had apparently laid down for himself, he for a season quitted his lonely studies, once more mingled in the gaieties of the county, even consented to grace the revels of royalty with his presence. His manner at such times was gracious, courtly, and strongly interesting. Like many men of his character and reputation, he exercised an almost resistless fascination over the fairer sex when he chose to enter the lists. It was so in this instance. He succeeded, in despite of a host of rivals and the opposition of her parents, in winning the hand of the beautiful Elinor de Warrenne, the daughter of a neighbouring baronet of lands and honours hardly inferior to his own. For a year or more the gloom which rested on his spirit seemed to have passed away. Happy in the possession of an heir, his conduct after marriage put to shame the ominous predictions of friends and foes. His wife was fondly attached to him. His stately manners had won sympathy for her, and the approval of the *grandes dames* of the county. He conciliated the tenantry; the ordinary duties of his station were not neglected. The happiest results were expected. He was even spoken of for the representation of the county; when, abruptly as he had emerged, he once more retreated into the seclusion of his laboratory, resisting all the efforts of his heart-broken wife and friendly well-

wishers to cause his return to the duties of his rank and station.

For more than a year he pursued in gloom and silence his self-appointed task, only taking exercise at night, and from time to time, as before, joining with sorcerers and necromancers (as the neighbourhood fully believed) in unblessed study, if not unholy rites. On one eventful morn, suspicion being aroused, search was made for him, when the turret was found to be vacant, save of broken crucibles, strange scrolls, and other remnants of the so-called "black art." The seasons came and went, Massinger Chase grew fair in early spring and summer prime, the leaves of many autumns faded and fell, the heir grew from a rosy infant to a sturdy schoolboy—a tall stripling. Then the lady pined and withered, after lingering sadly in hope of the return of him who never again crossed the threshold of his ancient hall.

She was laid to rest with the dames of her race. An authentic statement of the death of Sir Rainauld reached England from abroad, and his son, Sir Alured, reigned in his stead.

Meanwhile, it had been discovered after his departure that large sums had been disbursed, and payments made to foreign personages. Warrants and vouchers, legally witnessed, were in the hands of financiers whose demands could not be legally resisted. Sale had to be made, with the concurrence of Sir Alured when he came of age, of portions of the estate, which seriously curtailed its area and importance. Sir Alured, however, an easy-going, unambitious youth, had promised his mother, of whom he was passionately fond, to break the entail. Contented with the field-sports and homely

pleasures which there was no present danger of his being forced to relinquish, he cared little for the future. Notwithstanding the sacrifice of the goodly acres which (in addition to his portrait in the costume of a Roumanian heiduck, hanging in King Edward's corridor) gave Sir Rainauld's descendants something to remember him by, it had been found necessary to negotiate another loan upon the security of the estate. This was looked upon as an unimportant, easily released encumbrance at the time; but, like all the tentacles of the dire octopus, Debt, it had a tendency to draw the debtor closer to that gaping maw, down which in all ages have gone the old and worn, the young and fair, the strong and brave, all sorts and conditions of men.

Sir Alured had no desire to pry into the arcana of science, nor did he show curiosity about the transmutation of metals. Indolent, if not self-indulgent, he was wholly averse to the examination of accounts. The interest on the mortgage, with occasional loans, increased the liability notably before his death; so that when our hero, Sir Roland (an ancestor had fought at Roncesvalles), came into the estate on attaining his majority, he was startled at the portentous amount for which he stood liable to the mortgagee.

Being, however, for his age, a sensible young person, he set himself to live quietly, to reduce expenses, and in a general way to pay off his liabilities by degrees. Just as he had formed these meritorious resolves, rents commenced to fall. Old tenants, who had been punctual and regular of payment, began to decline from their proud position, asking for time, and, what was still worse, for abatement of rent. And with a

show of reason. What with the importation of cheap meat, butter, wheat, and oats—all manner of farm produce, indeed, produced in colonies and other countries —the English farmer found himself unable to continue to pay rents calculated on prices which seemed to have fled for ever. It was hoped that farm commodities would regain their value, but they receded for the two years which were to see a recovery. Finally, after consultations with Messrs. Nourse and Lympett, it was decided that, at Sir Roland's present scale of expenditure, there needed to be no compulsory sale in his time. An heiress would set all right. Sir Roland must marry money. It was his duty to his family, his duty to the county, his duty to England.

Then Massinger Court could be restored to its former splendour, and the estate to its legitimate position in the county.

Sir Roland did not assent or otherwise to these propositions. He did not particularly want to marry —just yet, at all events. He was too happy and comfortable as he was. Even with his curtailed revenues, he found the position of a country gentleman pleasant and satisfactory. He was not expected to do much, whereas everybody, old and young, were most anxious to make themselves useful and agreeable to him. Of course a man must marry some day.

So much was clearly the duty of the heir of Massinger. The ancient house must not be suffered to become extinct.

Strangely enough, the succession had always gone in the direct line. But there was no hurry. He had not seen any one so far on whom he was passionately anxious to confer the title of Lady Massinger. So,

matters might be worse. In this philosophical frame of mind, he told himself that he was content to remain a bachelor for the next half-dozen years or so, during which period his pecuniary affairs might be expected to improve rather than otherwise.

At eight and twenty a man is young—very young indeed, as occasionally reflects the middle-aged *vivcur*, looking regretfully back on the feats and feelings of his lost youth. Sir Roland was fairly well equipped, according to the society needs of the day. An Oxford degree taken creditably guaranteed all reasonable literary attainment ; at any rate, the means and method of further development. Fond of field-sports, he shot brilliantly and rode well. Vigorous and active, neither plain nor handsome, but having an air of distinction—that subtle but unmistakeable accompaniment of race—he yet presented few points of divergence from the tens of thousands of youthful Britons capable, in time of need, of calm heroism and Spartan endurance, but unaware of any pressing necessity for stepping out of the beaten track.

Though unostentatious by nature and habit, it was not to be supposed that the name of Sir Roland Massinger, of Massinger Court, was unfamiliar to matrons with marriageable daughters, as well in his own county, as in the Mayfair gatherings which he did not disdain during the season.

More than one of his fair partners would not have objected to bear his name and title embellished, as his position could not fail to be, by the handsome settlements which her father's steadfast attention to trade would enable him to make.

But, so far, all appreciative reception of his ordinary

courtesies—the sudden glance, the winning smile, the interested attention to his unstudied talk, conservatory lounges, country-house visits—all the harmless catalogue of the boy-god's snares and springes, were wasted on this careless wayfarer, protected by a lofty ideal and an untouched heart.

Though he had listened politely to the prudent counsel of his man of business as to the necessity of repairing his attenuated fortune by marriage, such an arrangement had never been seriously contemplated by him. He felt himself capable of a passionate attachment to the princess of his dreams, could Fate but lead him into her presence. Not as yet had he encountered her. That was beyond doubt. He would await the voice of the oracle. In the meanwhile he was far from being *ennuyé*. There was a mildly pleasurable sensation in merely contemplating "the supreme psychological moment" from afar, and speculating as to situations not yet arisen. He awaited in resigned contentment the goddess-moulded maiden. In the meanwhile he was not minded to worship at the shrines of the lesser divinities.

Was Fate, unsmiling, ironic, even now listening to the too-presumptuous mortal?

It would appear so. For, shortly after making these prudential resolutions, he met at a military ball the beautiful Hypatia Tollemache, who decided the question of elective affinity once and for ever. One look, a brief study of her unrivalled graces, an introduction, an entrancing interchange of ideas after a deliriously thrilling dance—even a second waltz, perilously near the end of the evening—and the solemn chime from the ancient tower, found an echo

in his heart, which seemed to ring "forever, ever, ever, forever."

That there are moments like this in men's lives, fateful, irrevocable, who may doubt? Sir Roland did not, at any rate. All the forces of his nature were aroused, electrically stimulated, magnified in power and volume. As they separated conventionally, and he delivered her into the care of her chaperon, the parting smile with which she favoured him seemed the invitation of an angelic visitant. He could have cast himself at her feet, had not the formalism of this too-artificial age forbidden such abasement.

When he returned to the country house where he was staying, he examined himself closely as to his sensations.

How had he, the cool and indifferent Roland Massinger, come to be so affected by this—by *any* girl? He could almost believe in the philtre of the ancients. It wasn't the champagne; he had forgotten all about it, besides being by habit abstemious. Supper he had hardly touched. It could not even be a form of indigestion—here he laughed aloud. Surely his reason wasn't giving way? He had heard of abnormal brain-seizures. But he was not the sort of man. He had never worked hard, though steadily at college. And, when a man's appetite, sleep, and general health were faultless, what could have caused this dire mental disturbance? He went to bed, but sleep was out of the question. Throwing open the window, he gazed over the hushed landscape. The moon, immemorial friend of lovers, came to his aid. Slowly and majestically she rose, silvering over the ruined abbey, the ghostly avenue, the far-seen river-

pools, as with calm, luminous, resistless ascent, she floated higher and yet higher through the cloud-world. Gradually his troubled spirit recognized the peaceful influence. His mind became composed, and betaking himself to bed, he sank into a slumber from which he was only aroused by the dressing-bell.

The cheerful converse of a country-house breakfast succeeding a prolonged shower-bath and a satisfactory toilette, restored him to a condition more nearly resembling his usual frame of mind. He was, however, rallied as to his sudden subjugation, which had not escaped the keen critics of a ball-room. In defence, he went so far as to admit that Miss Tollemache was rather a nice girl, and so on, adding to the customary insincerities a doubt whether "she wasn't one of the too-clever division. Scientific, or something in that line, struck me?"

"That's all very well, Sir Roland," said a lively girl opposite to him. "You needn't try to back out of your too-evident admiration of the fair Hypatia—we all saw it. Why, you never took your eyes off her from the moment she came into the room, till you put her into the carriage. You forgot your dance with me. You never *once* asked Jennie Castanette; she used to be your favourite partner. A sudden attack of whatsyname at first sight, don't they call it?"

"You ought to know best," he replied; "but Miss Tollemache is certainly handsome, or, rather, distinguished-looking; seems clever too, above the average, though she avoided literary topics."

"Clever!" retorted his fair opponent. "I should think she is, though I defy you to do more than guess at it from her talk; she is so unpretending in her

manner, and has a horror of showing off. Do you know what she did last year? There wasn't a girl that came near her in the University examinations."

"So much the worse for her chances of happiness or that of the man that marries her—if she is not too 'cultured' to marry at all."

"How do you make that out?"

"There are three things that tend to spoil a woman's character in the estimation of all sensible men," he answered: "beauty, money, or pre-eminent intellect. The beauty is flattered into outrageous vanity and frivolity. The heiress is besieged by suitors and toadies whose adulation fosters selfishness and arrogance. The third is perhaps the least evil, as after it is demonstrated that its possessor cannot lay down the law in private life, as she is prone to do, she retains a reserve of resources within herself, and mostly makes a rational use of them. Depend upon it, the post of honour is a 'middle station.'"

"Indeed! I am delighted to hear it," replied Miss Branksome. "So we poor mediocrities who have neither poverty nor riches—certainly not the last—and who don't profess beauty, have a fair chance of happiness? I was not quite sure of it before. And now, having unburdened yourself of all this 'philosophy in a country house,' you will dash off in pursuit of Hypatia directly you find out what she is going to do to-day. What will you give me if I tell you? 'Have you seen my Sylvia pass this way?' and so on."

"Hasn't she gone back to Chesterfield?" he asked.

"So it was erroneously supposed. But Lady Roxburgh will tell you when she comes down that she brought off a picnic to the ruins of St. Wereburgh's

Abbey ; that she has been invited from the Wensleydales, and all the house-party here are going. Unless, of course, you would prefer to stay behind and have a peaceful day in the library ?"

Sir Roland's face betrayed him. No human countenance, after such contending emotions as had almost "rent his heart in twain," could have retained its immobility.

"There now!" said Miss Branksome, scornfully. "'What a piece of work is man!' etc. I have been reading Shakespeare lately—on wet mornings."

"But are you certain as to the programme ?"

"Clara Roxburgh is my authority. The arrangement was made at an early hour this morning. You are relied on to drive the drag conveying the ladies of this household, including my insignificant self—not without value, I trust, to *some* people, however we poor ordinary mortals may be overshadowed by 'sweet girl graduates.'"

"Then may I venture to ask you, with Lady Roxburgh's permission, to occupy the box seat ?"

"That's very sweet of you ; *faute d'autre,* of course. Her ladyship's nerves won't permit of her taking it herself. And now let me give you a little advice—'honest Injun,' I mean—in all good faith and friendship, though I know you men don't believe in our capacity for that. Don't be too devoted. It's a mistake if you want to be successful ; any girl could tell you. We are mostly annoyed if we're run after. There's nothing like indifference ; it piques us. Then, if we like a man, we run after *him*—in a quiet ladylike way, of course. Do you follow ?"

"Oh yes ; a thousand thanks. Pray go on."

"I have only one other bit of warning. You're a lot older than me, and I dare say you think you know best, as I'm not long out. But you don't. Some day you'll see it. In the meantime don't give away *all* your heart before you make sure of a fair return. She may lead you on—unconsciously, of course—which means she wouldn't be rude to you and all the rest of it. But my idea is, she doesn't know what she wants just now. She's the sort of girl that thinks she's got a career before her. She won't be satisfied with the regulation returned affection, matrimony business."

"But surely such a woman has no commonplace thoughts, no vulgar ideals. She is incapable of such paltry bargaining for wealth or position."

"You think so? I don't say she's worse than any other girl who's got such a pull in the way of looks, brains, family, and all the rest of it. But none of us like to go cheap, and the love in a cottage business, or even a man like yourself of good county family, but *not* rich, *not* distinguished—h'm—as yet, *not* a power socially or politically in the land, is scarcely a high bid for a first-class property in the marriage market like Hypatia Tollemache."

"My dear Miss Branksome, don't talk like that. It pains me, I assure you."

"Perhaps it does, but it will do you good in the long run. It's pretty true, as you'll find out in time. And now, as I hear Lady Roxburgh coming downstairs, and I've talked enough nonsense for one morning, I'll go and get ready for the drag party. You'll know soon that I have no personal interest in the matter, though I've liked you always, and don't wish to see your life spoiled by a sentimental mistake."

And so this very frank young woman departed, just in time to meet the hostess, who, coming forward, explained her late arrival at the breakfast table by saying that she had to send off messages about the picnic party and an impromptu dance for the evening. She verified Miss Branksome's information respecting the drag, and the responsible office of coachman which Sir Roland expressed himself most willing to accept. But all the time he was suitably attiring himself; and even during a visit of inspection to the stables for the purpose of interviewing the well-matched team, and having a word or two with the head groom, a feeling of doubt would obtrude itself as he recalled the well-meant, unconventional warning of Miss Bessie Branksome.

"I suppose women know a good deal more about each other's ways than we do," he reflected. "But an average girl like Miss Branksome, good-hearted and well-intentioned, as she no doubt is, can no more enter into the motives of a woman like Miss Tollemache than a milkmaid could gauge the soul of a duchess. In any case, I must take my chance, and I shall have the satisfaction of taking my dismissal from *her* lips alone, for no other earthly authority will detach me from the pursuit. So that's settled."

And when Roland Massinger made use of that expression in soliloquy or otherwise, a certain line of action was definitely followed. Neither obstacles nor dissuasions had the smallest weight with him. In general, he took pains to work out his plans and to form his opinion before committing himself to them. This, however, he admitted, was an exception to his rule of life. Rule of life? It *was* his life—his soul,

mind, body—everything. "Whatever stirs this mortal frame"—of course. What did Byron say about love? "'Tis woman's whole existence." Byron didn't know: he had long since squandered the riches of the heart, the boundless wealth of the affections. He could *write* about love. But the real enthralling, all-absorbing, reverential passion of a true man's honest love, he did not know, never could have known, and was incapable of feeling.

After this burst of blasphemy against the acknowledged high priest of "Venus Victrix," the great singer of "love, and love's sharp woe," Sir Roland felt relieved, if not comforted.

Then came the more mundane business of the day. The girls' chatter, always more or less sweet in his ears, like the half-notes of thrushes in spring; the arranging of pairs, and the small difficulties in mounting to the high seats of the drag; the monosyllabic utterances of the swells, civil and military, who helped to compose the party, at length came to an end.

Finally, when, with pretty, lively, amusing Miss Branksome on the box seat beside him, he started the well-matched team, and, rattling down the avenue, swept through the park gates, and turned into the road which led to St. Wereburgh's, he felt once more in comparative harmony with his surroundings.

"Now, Sir Roland, you look more like your old self—like the man we used to know. You take my tip, and back your opinion for all you're worth. If it comes off, well and good; if it's a boil-over, pay and look pleasant. If you knew as much about girls as I do, you'd know there *are* as good fish in the sea, etc., though you men won't believe it. Now, promise me

not to do the Knight of the Woeful Countenance any more, won't you?"

"As the day is so fine, for a wonder, and the horses are going well together, not to mention the charming company of Miss Branksome on the box seat, who would be perfect if she would drop the didactic business, I think I may promise."

So, shaking himself together by a strong effort of will, such as he remembered when acting in private theatricals, he defied care and anxiety, enacting the gay worldling with pronounced success. So much so, that between his prowess as a whip and his cheery returns to the airy badinage usual on such occasions, he ran a close second to a cavalry officer on leave from India for the honourable distinction of "the life of the party."

Pleasant enough indeed was their progress through one of the most picturesque counties in England, but when they stopped within full view of the venerable ivy-clad ruin, of which a marvellous gateway and a noble arch still remained perfect, Sir Roland's gaze did not rest on those time-worn relics of ancient grandeur.

"She's not here yet," said Miss Branksome, with a smile, after the descent from the drag and the regulation amount of handshaking, greeting, and "How are you?" and "How is your dear mother?" had been got through. "The Wensleydales have farther to come, and I doubt if their horses are as fast as ours. Oh yes! now I see them—just behind that waggon in the lane, near the bridge. Hypatia is on the box beside young Buckhurst. *He* can't drive a bit; that's a point in your favour, if you can get her to exchange with me going back. I'll suggest it, anyhow."

Sir Roland gave his guide, philosopher, and friend a look of such gratitude that she began to laugh ; but, composing her countenance to an expression of the requisite propriety, she advanced to the rival coach, and so timed her movements that he was enabled to help the fair Hypatia to the ground—a slight, but smile-compelling service, which repaid the giver a hundred-fold.

Taking a mean advantage of Buckhurst, who was compelled for some reason to overlook the unharnessing of his horses, he thereupon walked away with the entrancing personage towards the assembled party, abandoning Miss Branksome, who discreetly preferred to busy herself in animated conversation with the new-comers.

After this fortunate commencement all went well. Smiling as the morn, pleased (and what woman is not?) with the marked attention of a "personage," Miss Tollemache confessed the exhilaration proper to that pleasantest of informal gatherings—a picnic to a spot of historic interest in an English county, with congenial intimates, and perhaps still more interesting strangers.

Her companion was well up in the provincial records, and thereby in a position of superiority to the rest of the company conversationally.

They had pulled up for lunch in the meadow, deep-swarded and thick with the clovers white and purple, mingled with the tiny fodder plants which nestle around a ruin in green England. The party was full of exclamations.

"What a darling old church!—thousands of years old it must be," said one of the Miss Wensleydales.

"Now, can any one tell me whether it is a Norman or a Saxon one?"

"Oh, Norman, surely!" was the verdict of several feminine voices, all at once.

"I am not quite certain," said Lady Roxburgh; "I always intended to look it up. What do you say, Miss Tollemache? You know more about these matters than we do."

"Oh, I don't pretend to any knowledge of architecture. A grand old ruin like this is such a thing of beauty that it seems a pity to pick it to pieces. That south door with its round arches looks rather Saxon. What does Sir Roland think? It's not far from Massinger, is it?"

"I used to know it well in my boyhood," replied that gentleman, who, truth to tell, had been waiting to be referred to. "Miss Tollemache is right; you will find its history in the Domesday Book. The manor was held by the secular canons of St. Wereburgh till the Conqueror gave it to Hugh Lupus, who granted it to the Benedictine monks."

"And was it an abbey church?" asked Miss Branksome, who may or may not have divined Sir Roland's special knowledge of church history.

"Certainly," he replied; "all the authorities are distinct on the point. The manor was held under the abbots by a family of the same name, so it must have belonged to the original Saxon stock."

"And why did they not keep it?" asked Lady Roxburgh. "Really, this is most interesting."

"A lady in the case," answered Sir Roland. "Alice de Sotowiche conveyed it away by her marriage with Robert de Maurepas. What the Normans did not

get by the sword they seem to have acquired by matrimony. It did not go out of the family, though, till the time of Edward the First. These De Maurepases battled for their manorial rights, too, which included fishing in the Welland, always providing that sturgeon went to the overlord."

"I always knew it was a dear old place," said Lady Roxburgh, "but now it seems doubly interesting. I must get up this history business for future use, and Miss Branksome shall give a little lecture about it next time we have a picnic."

"Thanks awfully, my dear Lady Roxburgh," said that young lady, "but I never could learn anything by heart in my life. I don't mind writing it down, though, from Sir Roland's notes, so that you can have it printed for private circulation at breakfast-time on picnic days."

"I think we might manage a county historical society," continued her ladyship. "It would be a grand idea for house-parties—only now it must be lunch-time. I see they have been unpacking. We must verify these quatrefoils, chevrons, and things afterwards."

They lunched under the mouldering walls, picturing a long-past day when, issuing forth from the courtyard of the neighbouring castle, had ridden knight and squire and lady fayre, attended by falconers and woodsmen, with hawk on wrist and hound in leash.

"What glorious times they must have had of it!" said Miss Tollemache. "I should like to have lived then. Life was more direct and sincere than in these artificial days."

"If we could only have seen the people as they really were," he replied, "'in their habit as they lived,'

mental or otherwise, it would be such splendid opera business, would it not? But they must have been awfully dull between times. Hardly any books, no cigars till later on; war and the chase their only recreations."

"Noble occupations both," said Miss Tollemache, with an air of conviction; "they left little room for the frivolous indolence of these latter days."

"Perhaps so," assented her companion. "You had either to knock people on the head or undergo the operation yourself. Then, mark the opposite side of the shield. In that very castle—while the gay troop was riding out with pennons flying—the feudal enemy or 'misproud' retainer was probably lying in the dungeon (*they had* one there, Orme says) after an imprisonment of years."

The gathering was a pronounced success. The ruin provided subjects for unlimited conversation as well as occasions for heroic daring in the matter of climbing. The lunch was perfect in its way; the ensuing walks and talks all that could be wished.

And when, after, as one of the young people declared, the "truly excellent—really delicious day" came so near to its close that the horses were brought up, Miss Branksome playfully suggested that she and Miss Tollemache should change seats, as she wished to take a lesson from the opposition charioteer in driving, and when, after a moment's playful contest, the fair enslaver was placed on the seat beside him, Sir Roland's cup of happiness was full.

"Let Fate do her worst;
There are moments of joy,
Bright dreams of the past,
Which she cannot destroy"—

must have been written by the poet, he felt assured, with that wondrous instinctive insight into the inmost soul of him, and all true lovers, which stamps the heaven-born singer.

Then the drive back to Roxburgh Hall, where they were to reassemble for the impromptu dance! The horses, home-returning, pulled just sufficiently to enable the box passenger to appreciate the strong arm and steady hand of her companion; and when, after an hour, the lamps were lit and the star-spangled night appeared odorous with the scents of early spring, the girl's low voice and musical laugh seemed the appropriate song-speech for which the star-clustered night formed fitting hour and circumstance.

Roland Massinger in that eve of delicious companionship abandoned himself to hope and fantasy. His fair companion had been so far acted upon by her environment, that she had permitted speculative allusions to the recondite problems of the day; to the deeper aims of life—subjects in which she evinced an interest truly exceptional in a girl of such acknowledged social distinction; while he, drawn on by the thought of possible companionship with so rarely-gifted a being, abandoned his usual practical and chiefly negative outlook upon the world, acknowledging the attraction of self-sacrifice and philanthropic crusade. His mental vision appeared to have received an illuminating expansion, and as those low, earnest, but melodious tones made music in his ear, emanating from the fair lips so closely inclined towards his own, he felt almost moved to devote his future energies, means, lands, and life to the amelioration of the race—to the grand aims of that altruistic federation of which,

it must be confessed, that he had been a formal, if not indifferent, professor. If only he might persuade this "one sweet spirit to be his minister"! Then, how cheerfully would he fare forth through whatever lands or seas she might appoint.

But that fatal *if!*

Why should *he* be privileged to appropriate this glorious creature, redolent of all the loveliness of earth's primal vigour, and yet informed with the lore of the ages, heightening her attractions a hundred —yes, a thousand-fold? Almost he despaired when thinking of his superlative presumption.

Fortunately for the safety of the passengers, who little knew what tremendous issues were oscillating in the brain of their pilot, he mechanically handled the reins in his usual skilled and efficient fashion. Nor, indeed, did the fair comrade, or she would scarcely have emphasized the conventional remark, "Oh, Sir Roland, what a delightful drive we have had! I feel so grateful to you!" as he swung his horses round, and, with practised accuracy, almost grazed the steps at the portico of Roxburgh Hall.

CHAPTER II

EVENTS shaped themselves much after the manner customary since that earliest recorded compromise between soul and sense which mortals throughout all ages have agreed to call Love. Ofttimes such pursuits and contests have been protracted. After the first skirmish of temperaments, war has been declared by Fate, and through wearisome campaigns the rival armies have ravaged cities, so to speak, and assaulted neutral powers before the beleaguered citadel surrendered.

At other times, the maiden fortress has been taken by a *coup de main*, the assailant's resistless ardour carrying all before it. More frequently, perhaps, has the too venturous knight been repulsed with scorn, and, as in earlier days, been fain to betake himself to Palestine or other distant region blessed with continuous warfare, and exceptional facilities for acquiring fame or getting knocked on the head, as the case might be.

For the patient and scientific conduct of a siege, according to the rules of the Court of Love—and such there be, if the poets and minstrels of all ages deserve credence—Roland Massinger was unfitted by

constitution and opinion. His fixed idea was, that every woman knew her mind perfectly well with regard to a declared admirer. If favourable, it was waste of time and emotion to await events. If otherwise, the sooner a man was made aware of his dismissal the better. He could then shape his course in life without distraction or hindrance. In any case he was freed from the hourly torments under which the victim writhes, uncertain of his fate. It was the *coup de grâce* which frees the wretch upon the rack; the knife-thrust which liberates the Indian at the stake. And he trusted to his manhood to be equal to the occasion.

When he did "put his fortune to the touch, to win or lose it all"—as have done so many gallant lovers before this veracious history—he was too deeply grieved and shocked at the unexpected issue to place before the fateful maid any of the pleadings or protests deemed in such cases to be appropriate. He did not falter out statements inclusive of a "wrecked life," an "early grave," a career "for ever closed." Nor did he make the slightest reference to her having, so to speak, allured him to continue pursuit—"led him on," in more familiar terms.

Such commonplaces he disdained, although not without a passing thought that in the familiar play of converse, and her occasional touch upon the key-notes which evoke the deeper sympathies, an impartial judge might have discovered that perilous liking akin to love.

No! beyond one earnest appeal to her heart, into which he implored her to look, lest haply she had mistaken its promptings—a plea for time, for cooler

consideration—he had no words with which to plead his cause, as he stood with sad reproachful gaze, assuring her that never would she know truer love, more loyal devotion.

What had she told him? Merely this: "That if she were to marry—a step which she had resolved not to take for some years, if at all—she confessed that there was no man whom she had yet known, with whom she felt more in sympathy, with whom, taking the ordinary phrase, she would have a greater prospect of happiness. But she held strong opinions upon the duties which the individual owed to the appealing hordes of fellow-creatures perishing for lack of care, of food, of instruction, by whom the over-indulged so-called upper classes were surrounded. Such manifest duties were sacred in her eyes, though possibly incompatible with what was called 'happiness.' For years—for ever, it might be—such considerations would be paramount with her. They could be neglected only at the awful price of self-condemnation in this world and perdition in the next. She was grieved to the soul to be compelled to refuse his love. She blamed herself that she should have permitted an intimacy which had resulted so unhappily for him—even for herself. But her resolve was fixed; nothing could alter it."

This, or the substance of it, fell upon the unwilling ears of Roland Massinger in unconnected sentences, in answer to his last despairing appeal. Meanwhile his idol stood and gazed at him, as might be imagined some Christian maiden of the days of Diocletian, when called upon to deny her faith or seal it with martyrdom. Her eyes were occasionally lifted

upward, as if she felt the need of inspiration from above.

For one moment the heart of her lover stood still. He placed his hand on his brow as if to quell the tumult of his thoughts. She moved towards him, deprecating the intensity of his emotion. An intolerable sense of her divine purity, her ethereal loveliness, seemed to pervade his whole being. He felt an almost irresistible desire to clasp her in his arms in one desperate caress, ere they parted for ever. Had he done this, the current of both lives might have been altered. The coldest maids are merely mortal.

But he refrained; in his present state of mind it would have been sacrilege to his ideal goddess, to the saintly idol of his worship.

Raising her hand reverently to his lips, he bowed low and departed.

When he thus passed out of her sight—out of her life—Hypatia herself was far from unmoved. Regrets, questionings, impulses to which she had so far been a stranger, arose and contended with strange and unfamiliar power.

Never before had she met with any one in all respects so attractive to her physically, so sympathetic mentally; above all things manly, cultured, devoted, with the instincts of the best age of chivalry. She liked —yes, nearly, perhaps quite—loved him. Family, position, personal character, all the attributes indispensably necessary, he possessed.

Not rich, indeed; but for riches she cared little—despised them, indeed. Why, then, had she cast away the admittedly best things of life? For an abstraction!

For toilsome, weary, perhaps ungrateful tasks among the poor, the disinherited of the earth.

Had not others of whom she had heard, died, after wasting, so to speak, their lives and opportunities, with scarcely veiled regrets for the sacrifice? How many secretly bewailed the deprivation of the fair earth's light, colour, beauty, consented to in youth's overstrained sense of obedience to a divine injunction! Was this wealth of joyous gladness—the free, untrammelled spirit in life's springtime, which bade the bird to carol, the lamb to frisk, the wildfowl to sport o'er the translucent lake—but a snare to lead the undoubting soul to perdition? As these questioning fancies crossed her mind, in the lowered tone resulting in reaction from the previous mood of exaltation, she found her tears flowing fast, and with an effort, raising her head as if in scorn of her weakness, hurried to her room.

* * * * * *

A sudden stroke of sorrow, loss, disappointment, or disaster affects men differently, but the general consensus is that the blow, like wounds that prove mortal, is less painful than stunning. Roland Massinger never doubted but that his wound *was* mortal. For days he wondered, in the solitude of his retreat to which he had, like other stricken deer, betaken himself, whether or no he was alive. He returned to the Court. He moved from room to room—he absorbed food. He even opened books in the library and essayed to read, finding himself wholly unable to extract the meaning of the lettered lines. He rode and drove at appointed hours, but always with a strange preoccupied expression. This change

of habit and occupation was so evident to his old housekeeper and the other domestics, that the subject of their master's obvious state of mind began to be freely discussed. The groom was of opinion that he did not know the bay horse that carried him so well to hounds, from the black mare that was so fast and free a goer in the dog-cart.

He retired late, sitting in the old-fashioned study which served as a smoking-room, "till all hours," as the maids said.

He rose early, unconscionably so, as the gardener considered who had met him roaming through the shrubberies before sunrise. A most unusual proceeding, indefensible "in a young gentleman as could lie in bed till breakfast-bell rang."

The maids were instinctively of the opinion that "there was a lady in the case;" but, upon broaching their ingenuous theory, were so sternly silenced by Mrs. Lavender, the old housekeeper who had ruled in Massinger long before Sir Roland's parents had died, and remembered the last Lady Massinger as "a saint on earth if ever there was one," that they hastily deserted it, hoping "as he wouldn't have to be took to the county hospital." This theory proving no more acceptable than the other, they were fain to retire abashed, but clinging with feminine obstinacy to their first opinion.

Suddenly a change came over the moody squire who had thus exercised the intelligences of the household.

On a certain morning he ordered the dog-cart, in which he drove himself to the railway station, noticing the roadside incidents and mentioning the stud

generally, in a manner so like old times, that the groom felt convinced that the desired change had taken place; so that hunting, shooting, and all business proper to the season would go on again with perhaps renewed energy.

"When the master jumped down and ordered the porter to label his trunk 'London,' he was a different man," said the groom on his return. "He's runnin' up to town to have a lark, and forgit his woes. That's what I should do, leastways. He ain't agoin' to make a break of it along o' Miss Tollemache, or any other miss just yet."

Though this information was acceptable to the inmates of a liberally considered household, who one and all expressed their satisfaction, the situation was not destined to be lasting. Within a week it was widely known that Massinger Court was for sale, "just as it stood," with furniture, farm-stock, library, stud, everything to be taken at a valuation—owner about to leave England.

What surprise, disapproval—indeed, almost consternation—such an announcement is calculated to create in a quiet county in rural England, those only who have lived and grown up in such "homes of ancient peace" can comprehend. A perfect chorus of wonder, pity, indignation, and disapproval arose.

The squirearchy lamented the removal of a landmark. The heir of an historic family, "a steady, well-conducted young fellow, good shot, straight-goer in the field—knew something about farming, too. Not too deep in debt either? That is, as far as anybody knew. What the deuce could he mean by

cutting the county; severing himself from all his old friends—his father's friends, too?"

This was the lament of Sir Giles Weatherly, one of the oldest baronets in the county. "D—n it," he went on to say, "it ought to be prevented by law. Why, the place was entailed!"

"Entail broken years ago; but that wouldn't mend matters," his companion, Squire Topthorne, replied—a hard-riding, apple-faced old gentleman, credited with a shrewd appreciation of the value of money. "You can't force a man to live on a place, though he mustn't sell it. It wouldn't help the county much to have the Court shut up, with only the old housekeeper, a gardener, and a maid, like Haythorpe. Besides, some decent fellow might buy it—none of us could afford to do so just now. *I* couldn't, I know."

"Nor I either," returned Sir Giles, "with wheat at thirty shillings a quarter, and farms thrown back on your hands, like half a dozen of mine. But why couldn't Roland have stopped in England; married and settled down, if it comes to that? There are plenty of nice girls in Herefordshire; a good all-round youngster like him, with land at his back, might marry any one he pleased."

"That's the trouble, from what I hear," said Mr. Topthorne, with a quiet smile. "Young men have a way of asking the very girl that won't have them, while there are dozens that would. Same, the world over. And the girls are just as bad—won't take advice, and end up as old maids, or take to 'slumming' and Zenana work. I hear it's Hypatia Tollemache who's responsible."

"Whew-w!" whistled Sir Giles. "She's a fine girl, and knows her value, I suppose, but she's bitten by this 'New Woman' craze—wants to regenerate society, and the rest of it. In our time girls did what they were told—learned house-keeping, and thought it a fair thing to be the mistress of some good fellow's household; to rear wholesome boys and girls to keep up the honour of old England. I have no patience with these fads."

"Well! it can't be helped. Have you any idea who is likely to make a bid for the place?"

"Not the slightest. We're safe to have a manufacturer, or some infernal colonist—made his money by gold-digging or sheep-farming, drops his aitches, and won't subscribe to the hounds."

"Suppose we do? You're too hard on colonists, who, after all, are our own countrymen, with the pluck to go abroad, instead of loafing at home. Often younger sons, too—men of as good family as you or I. We're too conservative here, I often think. They always spend their money liberally, give employment, and entertain royally if they do the thing at all."

"I suppose there's something in what you say; but all the same, I don't like to see a Massinger go out of the county where his family have lived since the time of Hugh Lupus. Viscount the Sire de Massinger came out of Normandy along with Duke William. He was a marshal commanding a division of archers at Hastings. 'For which service both the Conqueror and Hugh Lupus rewarded him' (says an old chronicle) 'with vast possessions, among which was Benham Massinger in Cheshire; and the said Hamon de Massinger was the first Baron de Massinger.' There's a pedigree for

you! Pity they hadn't kept their lands; but they're not the only ones, as we know too well."

These and the like colloquies took place during the period which intervened between the direful announcement of the sale of the Court and its actual disposal by an auction sale, at which the late owner was not present.

It was then made public that the stranger who bought that "historic mansion, Massinger Court, with lands and messuages, household furniture, and farm stock, horses and carriages," was acting as agent only for Mr. Lexington, the great Australian squatter, who had made a colossal fortune in New South Wales and Queensland, numbering his sheep by the half-million and his cattle by the twenties of thousands. He had, moreover, agreed to take the furniture, books, pictures —everything—at a valuation, together with the live stock, farm implements, and—in fact, the whole place, exactly as it stood; Sir Roland, the auctioneer said, having removed his personal belongings previously to London immediately after offering the Court for sale. He only returned to bid farewell to the friends of his youth and the home of his race.

Yes! it *was* hard—very hard, he thought, at the last. There was the garden—old-fashioned, but rich in fruit and flower, with box-borders, clipped yew hedges, alleys of formal shape and pattern; the south wall where the fruit ripened so early, and to which his childish eyes had so often been attracted; the field wherein he had, with the old keeper in strict attendance, been permitted to blaze at a covey of partridges—he remembered now the wild delight with which he marked his first slain bird; the

stream in which he had caught his first trout, and whence many a basket had been filled in later days; the village church, under the floor of which so many de Massingers lay buried—the family pew, too large for the church, but against the size and shape of which no innovating incumbent had thought fit to protest.

How well he remembered his mother's loving hand as he walked with her to church—*every* Sunday, unless illness or unusual weather forbade! That mother, too, so gentle, so saintly sweet, so charitable, so beloved, why should she have died when he was so young? And his father, the pattern squire, who shot and hunted, lived much at home, and was respected throughout the county as a model landlord, who did his duty to the land which had done so much for the men of his race? Why should these things be?

He recalled his mother's dear face, which grew pale, and yet more pale, during her long illness—her last words bidding him, to be a good man, to remember what she taught him, and to comfort his poor father when she was gone. And how he kneeled by her bedside, with her wasted hand in his, praying with her that he might live to carry out her last wishes, and do his duty fearlessly in the face of all men. Then the funeral—the long train of carriages, the burial service, where so many people wept, and he wished—how he wished!—that he could be buried with her. His father's set face, almost stern, yet more sorrowful than any tears. And how he went back to school in his black clothes, miserable and lonely beyond all words to describe.

In the holidays, too—how surprised he had been to

find that the squire no longer shot, fished, hunted. He, that was so keen as long as he could remember, but now sat all day reading in the library, where they often used to find him asleep. And how, before the Christmas holidays came round again, he was sent for, to see his father once more before he died.

The squire spoke not—he had for days lost the power of speech—but he placed his hands upon his head and murmured an inarticulate blessing. He did not look pale or wasted like his poor mother, he remembered. The doctors said there was no particular ailment ; he had simply lost all interest in life. The old housekeeper summed up the case, which coincided closely with the public feeling.

"It's my opinion," she affirmed, "that if ever a man in this world died of a broken heart, the squire did. He was never the same after the mistress died, God bless her! She's in heaven, if any one is. She was a saint on earth. And the squire, seeing they'd never been parted before—and I never saw two people more bound up in each other—well, he couldn't stay behind."

The new lord of the manor — for Massinger held manorial rights and privileges, which had been tolerably extensive in the days of "merrie England" —lost no time in taking possession.

A week had not elapsed before the Australian gentleman and his family arrived by train at the little railway station, much like any one else, to the manifest disappointment of the residents of the vicinity, who had expected all sorts of foreign appearances and belongings. Certain large trunks—*not* Saratogas—and portmanteaux were handed out of the brake-van and

transferred to the waggonette, which they filled, while three ladies with their maid were escorted to the mail phaeton which had made so many previous journeys to the station with the visitors and friends of the Massinger family. A middle-aged, middle-sized, alert personage, fair-haired, clean-shaved, save for a moustache tinged with grey, mounted the dog-cart, followed by a tall young man who looked with an air of scrutiny at the horses and appointments. He took the reins from the groom, who got up behind, and with one of those imperceptible motions with which a practised whip communicates to well-conditioned horses that they are at liberty to go, started the eager animal along the well-kept road which led to the Court.

"Good goer," he remarked, after steadying the black mare to a medium pace. "If she's sound, she's a bargain at the money; horses seem tremendously dear in England."

"Yes, I should say so," replied his father. "And the phaeton pair are good-looking enough for anything: fair steppers also. I thought the price put on the horses and cattle high, but the agent told me they were above the average in quality. I see he was correct so far."

"Well, it's a comfort to deal with people who are straight and above-board," said the younger man. "It saves no end of trouble. I shouldn't wonder if the home-station—I mean the house and estate—followed suit in being true to description. If so, we've made a hit."

"Sir Roland wouldn't have a thing wrong described for the world, sir," here put in the groom, touching his hat. "No auctioneer would

take that liberty with him; not in this county, anyhow."

"Glad to hear it. I thought as much, from seeing him once," said the elder man.

A short hour saw the black mare tearing up the neatly raked gravel in front of the façade of the Court, and by the time the dog-cart had departed for the stables, the phaeton came up to the door, with one of the young ladies in the driving seat.

"Well, this *is* a nice pair of horses!" said the damsel, who evidently was not unaccustomed to driving a pair, if not a more imposing team. "Fast, so well matched and well mannered; it's a pleasure to drive them. And oh! what a lovely old hall—and such darling trees! How fortunate we were to pick up such a place! It's not too large: there's not much land, but it's a perfect gem in its way. I suppose we are to have the pictures of the ancestors, too?"

"We shall have that reflected glory," said the matron with a smile. "Sir Roland would not sell them, but hoped we would give them house-room till he wanted them—which might not be for years and years."

"So they will still look down upon us—or frown, as the case may be," said the younger girl. "How savage I should be if I were an ancestor, and new people came to turn out my descendant!"

"We haven't turned him out. We only buy him out," said her mother, "which is quite a different thing. It is the modern way of taking the baron's castle—without bloodshed and unpleasantness."

"It is a great shame, all the same, that he should have to turn out," exclaimed the younger girl,

indignantly. "I am sure he is a nice fellow, which makes it all the worse, because—because——"

"Because every one says so," continued her elder sister; "as if that was a reason!"

"No! because he has *such good horses.* When a man keeps them, in such buckle too, there can't be much wrong with him."

"What *is* the reason that he can't live in a place like this, I wonder?" queried Miss Lexington in a musing tone. "A bachelor, too! Men don't seem to know when they are well off. He ought to try a dry year on one of our Paroo runs, if he wants a change. That would take the nonsense out of him. Our vile sex at the bottom of it, I suppose!"

"I *did* catch a whisper in London, before we left," said Miss Violet, cautiously.

"You always do," interrupted her sister. "I hope you don't talk to Pinson confidentially. What was it?"

"Only that a girl that every one seemed to know about wouldn't have him, and that he nearly went out of his mind about it: wouldn't hear of living in England afterwards."

"Poor fellow! he'll know better some day—won't he, mother? He must be a romantic person to go mooning about, wanting to die or emigrate, for a trifle like that."

"I sometimes wonder if you girls of the present day have hearts, from the way you talk," mused the matron. "However, I suppose they're deeper down than ours used to be. But I don't like my girls to sneer at true love. It's a sacred and holy thing, without which we women would have a sad time in this world. But, in our own country, men have done

rash things in the agony of disappointment. You have heard of young Anstruther?"

"Oh yes, long ago. He went home and shot himself because of a silly girl. I suppose he's sorry for it now."

"Hearts are much the same, in all countries and ages, depend upon it, my dears; they make people do strange things. But let us hope that there will be no unruly promptings in this family."

"Quite so, mother—same here; but I suppose, as Longfellow tells us, 'as long as the heart has woes,' all sorts of droll things will happen. And now suppose we go and look at the stables before afternoon tea; I want to see the hunters and polo ponies. The garden we can see to-morrow morning."

* * * * * *

When Sir Roland, having made final arrangements, concluded to run down to Massinger for farewell purposes, he declined courteously Mr. Lexington's invitation to stay with him, and took up his abode at the Massinger Arms, in the village, where he considered he would be quiet and more independent. He felt himself obliged to say farewell to the people he had known all his life, small and great. But he never had less inclination for conversation and the ordinary society business. A week at the outside would suffice for such leave-taking as he considered obligatory.

As to the emigration matter which had so disturbed his *monde*, another factor of controlling power entered into the calculation. A re-valuation of his property made it apparent that when every liability came to be paid off, the available residue would be much

less than he or his men of business reckoned on. Not more, indeed, than the ridiculously small sum of thirty or forty thousand pounds. He was not going to live on the Continent, or any cheap foreign place, on this. Nor to angle for an heiress. So, having been informed that he could live like a millionaire in the colonies, and probably make a fortune out of a grazing estate which half the money would purchase, there was nothing to keep him in England. Such considerations, reinforced by the haunting memories of a "lost Lenore" in the guise of Hypatia, drove him forward on his course *outre mer* with such feverish force that he could scarcely bear to await the day of embarkation.

CHAPTER III

He could not well refuse an invitation to dinner from his successor, who called upon him, in form, the day after his arrival, and again begged him to make the old hall his home until he left England.

This request he begged to decline, much to Mr. Lexington's disappointment, though he agreed to dine.

"My people were looking forward to having your advice upon all sorts of matters, which, of course, you would know about better than any one else. We are not going to make any great changes that I know of," said Mr. Lexington. "Everything on the estate is in excellent order ; your overseer—I mean bailiff—seems sensible and experienced. I shall give him his own way chiefly. He knows the place and the people, which of course I don't. My children, being Australians, are fond of horses ; they are so much pleased with your lot, that you may be sure of their being well treated—and pensioned, when their time comes. I never sold an old favourite in my life, and am not going to begin in England, though you can't turn out a horse here all the year round as you can in Australia. And now I'll say good afternoon. Sorry

you can't stay with us. We shall see you at dinner —half-past seven ; but come any time."

Upon which Mr. Lexington departed, leaving a pleasant impression with the former owner.

"What mistaken prejudices English people have, for the most part!" he thought. "Sir Giles Weatherly, I heard, was raving at my want of loyalty to the landed interest because I had left an opening for some 'rough colonist' to break into our sacred county enclosure. This man is a thorough gentleman, liberal and right-feeling ; besides, with pots of money too, he will be able to do far more for the neighbourhood than would ever have been in my power. I shouldn't be surprised if the county considers him an improvement upon an impoverished family like ours before many months are past."

With a half-sigh, involuntary, but not without a distinct feeling of regret, as he thought how soon his place would be filled up, and how different a position would have been his had one woman's answer been otherwise, he addressed himself once more to the momentous question of emigration. He had purchased a quantity of colonial literature, and had made some headway through the handbooks thoughtfully provided for the roving Englishman of the period. The difficulty lay in deciding between the different offshoots of Britain. All apparently possessed limitless areas of fertile land and rich pasturage, in addition to goldfields, coal-mines, opal and diamond deposits, silver and copper mines, the whole vast territory reposing in safety under the world-wide ægis of the British flag.

Before he had found anything like a solution of

this pressing problem, the church clock suggested dressing. So, attiring himself suitably, he made his way to the Court. He rang the hall-door bell somewhat impatiently, having only partially got over the feeling of strangeness at being invited to dinner at his own house, so to speak, and being shown into the drawing-room by his own butler. This official's gravity relaxed suddenly, after a vain struggle, and ended in a gasping "Oh, Sir Roland!" as he announced him in due form.

In the drawing-room, where nothing had been added or altered, he found three ladies, the son of the house, and his host. "Mrs. Lexington, Miss Lexington, and my daughter Violet, with my son Frank," comprehended the introductions.

All were in evening attire, the ladies very quietly but becomingly dressed. The dinner was much as usual; his own wines, glass, and table decorations were in the same order as before. Could he have given a dinner-party unawares? His position at the right hand of Mrs. Lexington seemed hardly to decide the question.

No reference was made by any of the company, which included the rector of the parish (a few minutes late), to his reasons for expatriating himself, though expressions of regret occurred that he should be leaving the country.

"My daughters are lost in astonishment that you should voluntarily quit such a paradise, as it appears to us sunburnt Australians," said the lady of the house.

"You wouldn't have got *me* to leave it without a fight," said Miss Lexington; "but I suppose men get

tired of comfort in this dear old country, where everything goes on by itself apparently, and even the servants seem 'laid on' like the gas and water. They must want danger and discomfort as a change."

"There would not appear to have been much in the country from which you came," replied Sir Roland, declining the personal question.

"We have had our share," said Mr. Lexington. "Fortunately one is seldom the worse for it; perhaps the more fitted to enjoy life's luxuries, when they come in their turn. Tell Sir Roland something, Frank, about that dry season when you were travelling with the 'Diamond D' cattle."

"Rather early in the evening for Queensland stories, isn't it?" replied the younger man thus invoked, who did not, except in a deeper tint of bronze, present any point of departure from the home-grown product. "Tell him one or two after dinner. I'd rather have his advice about the country sport, if he'll be good enough to enlighten me."

"A better guide than my old friend the rector here the country doesn't hold," said the ex-squire. "He knows to a day when 'cock' may be expected, and though he doesn't hunt now, he used to be in the first flight; as for fishing, he's Izaak Walton's sworn disciple. I leave you in good hands. All the same, I'm ready to be of use in any way."

"The weather feels warm now, even to us. We hardly expected such a day," remarked Mrs. Lexington; "and as we have none of us been home before, we don't quite know what to make of it."

"If it's a trifle warm and close, it never lasts more than a few days, they tell me," said the eldest daughter;

"and the nights are always cool. That's one comfort. I always feel like putting a new line in my prayers of thankfulness for there being hardly any flies and no mosquitoes. And such lovely fresh mornings to wake up in! Such trees, such grass! No wonder the hymns speak of 'a happy English child!'"

"All the same, Australia is not a bad country," said Mrs. Lexington, "though we did have seventeen days once at the Macquarie River when it was a hundred in the shade every day and ninety every night. On the other hand, the Riverina winter was superb—such cloudless days and merely bracing mornings and evenings. I dare say we shall miss *them* here in 'chill October.' Sir Roland will give us his impressions when he returns, perhaps," she continued. "It is hard to find a climate which is pleasant all the year round. A cool summer is enjoyed at the expense of a cold winter. And we have extremes even in Australia. I saw in the paper lately some account of pedestrians being thirty hours in snow, and much exhausted when they reached their destination after being out all night."

"I should hardly have thought that possible," said the guest, genuinely astonished.

"English people hear more of the heat of our climate than the cold," said his host, good-humouredly; "but the mails are carried on snow-shoes in the winter season of a town I know, and I have seen the children going to school in them too."

"Oh, come! dad will soon begin to tell stories about snakes," said Miss Violet, "if we don't turn the conversation. Do you have much lawn tennis in the neighbourhood, Sir Roland?"

"A good deal," he replied, "as the rector will tell you. His daughters are great performers, and at the last tournament with West Essex Miss Charlton was the champion."

"Oh, how delightful! We all play except dad and mother, so we shall be able to keep up our form."

"Then it's not too hot in the Australian summer for exercise?"

"It's never too hot for cricket, or dancing, or tennis in our country. We couldn't do without them, so the weather must take its chance. After all, a little heat, more or less, doesn't seem to matter."

"Apparently not," said Sir Roland, noting the girl's well-developed figure, regular features, and animated expression.

In truth, they were both handsome girls, though their complexions showed a clear but healthy pallor, as distinguished from the rose-bloom of their British sisters. If Sir Roland had not been dead to all sympathetic consideration of the great world of woman, it would have occurred to him that a man might "go farther and fare worse" than by choosing either of these frank, unspoiled maidens, rich in the possession of the charm of youth and the crowning glory of the sex—the tender, faithful heart of a true woman.

But to his dulled and disturbed senses, not as yet recovered from the merciless blow dealt him by fate, no such appreciation of their youthful graces was possible.

He was courteous to the utmost point of politeness, scrupulously attentive to their queries about this, to them, unfamiliar land of their forefathers; careful also to requite the consideration with which he felt they

had regarded him. But they might have been any one's maiden aunts, or indeed grandmothers, for all the personal interest which he felt in them. Indeed, when Mrs. Lexington caught her eldest daughter's eye and proceeded to the drawing-room, he was distinctly conscious of a feeling of relief.

Then, as he drew up his chair at the suggestion of his host, he began to show increased interest, as the question of a desirable colony to betake himself to was mooted.

"You are not in the same position as many young men whom Frank and I have met. You are accustomed to a country life, and have a practical knowledge of farming. Your cattle and sheep (we went through them this morning) do the management credit, and the bailiff tells me that you directed it in a general way. The crops and the grass lands are A 1. So you won't have so much to learn when you've thought out the climate in Australia. May I consider that you prefer agriculture to a pastoral life?"

"I must say that I do, though I don't limit myself to any particular pursuit or investment. I should feel grateful for your advice in the matter."

"We are all New South Wales people, born there indeed, and probably prejudiced in its favour. It is the mother colony of Australia, and until lately the largest, so that there was always plenty of scope. We have never, like most of the larger pastoralists, had much to do with farming, preferring to buy our hay, corn, flour, and such trifles from the small settlers."

"The squatters, as I suppose they are called," interposed Massinger, who was beginning to be proud of his colonial knowledge.

"Well, not exactly," corrected the colonist. "The smaller holders are called farmers, or 'free-selectors,' having by a late Act of Parliament acquired the right of free choice over the Crown lands leased in vast acres to the squatters. They follow farming exclusively as an occupation, and are chiefly tenants, or men of small capital. The squatter, on the other hand, is the Australian country gentleman—the landlord, where he is a free holder. It is therefore the more fashionable pursuit, so to speak, and as such, has proved attractive to men like yourself, who commence colonial life with a fair amount of capital. Perhaps Frank will give you his views."

"I never could stand farming at any price," said the younger colonist. "I hardly know a turnip from a potato. My fancy has always been for the big outside stations. There's something to stir a man's blood in managing a property fifty miles square, with plain, forest, and river to match. Then twenty thousand head of cattle, or a hundred thousand sheep to organize a commissariat for, and an army of men to command! There's no time to potter about ploughing and harrowing, haymaking or reaping, in country like that. You might as well dig your own garden."

"But surely they are necessary occupations?" queried the intending colonist.

"Not to men with a million of acres or so in hand. They can't worry over details. We buy everything we want in that way, and have it brought to our doors, more cheaply than we could grow it. Our work in life, so far, is to produce cheap beef, mutton, and wool, to feed your people and for them to manufacture.

That, I take it, is our present business, and anything that interferes with it is a loss to the empire."

"That seems a short list of products for a great country like yours. Couldn't you supply anything more from the land?"

"All in good time," said the young man, sipping his claret. "By-and-by, when labour becomes more plentiful and the population denser, we shall send you butter and bacon, cheese, honey, fruit, flour, sugar, wine, and oil—even rabbits, confound them!—by the million. These products, when we have time, and have overtaken the local demand, we can export by the shipload. A hundred thousand frozen lambs—that kind of thing—in one steamer."

"But you have said nothing about horses. Surely I have heard that your country is very suitable for rearing them?" asked their guest.

"Suitable!" ejaculated the young Australian, with more animation than he had previously expressed. "I should think so. Yet up to this day, though a fascinating pursuit, horses haven't paid so well as sheep and cattle. But our time is coming. I have always maintained that we could breed cavalry and artillery horses for all Europe—more cheaply, too, than any other country in the world; horses possessing extraordinary courage, stoutness, speed, and constitution. From the way in which they are reared on the natural grasses in the open air, they have the best feet and legs in the world. The Indian buyers find them more suitable for cavalry and artillery than Arabs or their own stud-breds, but as yet they only take a tenth part of what we could rear if the markets were more steady and assured. It will be proved some day that

the English horse gains in stoutness in Australia after a generation, and I look forward even to our sending you back pure Australian thoroughbreds, equal in speed to their imported grandsires, but sounder, stronger in constitution, and with more bone."

As the descendant of Kentish squires spoke with heightened feeling upon what was evidently a favourite theme, Massinger could not help admitting that the speaker himself was no bad exemplar of the favourable conditions of a free, adventurous, roving life upon the Anglo-Saxon type. Frank Lexington was, indeed, as fine a man as you could make physically—a description once applied to him by an enthusiastic admirer at an up-country race meeting. Standing somewhat over six feet in height, he was admirably proportioned, and not less for strength than activity. His features were regular, approaching the Greek ideal in outline, while his steady eye and square jaw denoted the courage and decision which, young as he seemed, had been tested full many a time and oft. His hands, though bronzed and sinewy with occasional experiences of real hard work, were delicately formed, while his filbert nails, perhaps as true a test as any other of gentle blood and nurture, had evidently never lacked careful tendance.

Fairly well read, and soundly if not academically educated, he was but one of a class of the present generation of Australians who do no discredit to the imperial race from which they spring.

Before these reflections had come to a conclusion, however, Mr. Lexington rose, saying—

"Now that Frank has got to the horses of his native country, we had better adjourn the debate, if

you won't take another glass of port, or his mother and sisters will be scolding us for staying too long over our wine."

Soon after their arrival in the drawing-room the opposition found a speaker.

"We thought you were never coming, daddy dear," said Miss Violet. "What in the world do men find to talk about when *we're* not there? I suppose, though, that you were giving Sir Roland a lecture on colonial experience, and Frank had fallen foul of the shooting and fishing topics, or, worst of all, the great horse question! Ah! I see you look guilty, so I won't say any more about it."

"I'm sure it's very natural, my dear," said Mrs. Lexington. "Of course Sir Roland knows as little of colonial life as your father does about English farming. Either experience would be valuable, you know."

"I am not so sure of that," quoth the merry damsel, who appeared to be of independent mind. "I've rarely known dad take any one's opinion but his own; and as to advising new—er—that is—new arrivals in Australia, you remember what Jack Charteris said when somebody asked him to do so?"

"Something saucy, no doubt."

"Oh no; it was only to this effect—that if the young fellow had any common sense, he would soon find out everything for himself; and if he hadn't, nothing that you could say would do him any good."

"I am afraid that you will give Sir Roland a strange idea of Australian young ladies' manners. For a change, Marion might try this lovely piano. It's almost new; too good for a bachelor's establishment."

Massinger winced a little, but did not explain that,

as the adored personage had once been inveigled into joining an afternoon tea at the Court on the way back from a tennis match, of which he had received timely notice, he had ordered a new grand piano to be sent down from London, so that it might be ready for her divinely fair fingers to essay.

"The other one," he replied, carelessly, "was rather old—had, indeed, been sent up to a morning-room; just did for practising on when ladies were in the house."

"I should think it did," said Miss Lexington, indignantly. "Why, it's better now than half the people have in their drawing-rooms. I'm afraid you won't make much of a fortune in Australia if you're so extravagant. Three hundred and fifty pounds' worth of pianos in a house with a family of *one!*"

"I'm like the man in your sister's story, Miss Lexington," said he, smiling at the girl's earnestness. "Advice will be thrown away upon me. But perhaps I may improve after a few months."

"Months!" said the girl; and a sudden look almost of compassion changed the lustre of her dark grey eyes. "How little you know of the *years* and years before you!—the changes and chances, the bad seasons, the dull life; and then perhaps nothing at the end—absolutely nothing! And to come away from this!" And she looked round the noble room, which, if not magnificently furnished, was yet replete with modern comfort, and had, in the priceless pieces of carved oaken furniture, the air of ancient and long-descended possession. "How *could* you?"

He turned and faced her with an air of smiling but irrevocable decision.

"My resolve was not taken without consideration, I assure you; and I have yet to learn that an Englishman is likely to find himself at fault among his countrymen in any of Britain's colonies. But I am anxious to hear my ecstatic instrument for the last time."

Marion Lexington, as are many Australian girls, had been extremely well taught—received, indeed, the instruction of an artist of European reputation. Her ear was faultless, her taste accurate. She therefore, after a prelude of Bach's, broke into one of Schubert's wild, half-mournful "Momens Musicals," which she played with such feeling and power as rather to surprise her hearer, who, a fair judge, and something of an amateur, was no mean critic. She did not sing, she explained, but after she had concluded with a Scherzo, Miss Violet was prevailed upon to sing a couple of songs, which showed, by the management of a pure soprano, that she had received the tuition which had fitly developed its high quality.

Massinger could hardly refrain from expressing a faint degree of surprise, as he wondered how systematic training was possible in the primitive surroundings of a pastoral life.

"An English judge in a *cause célèbre* once described the squatter's occupation as a 'rude wandering life,'" said Mr. Lexington, smiling; "but for many years my wife and the girls lived in Sydney during the summer, and only went to our principal station, which is near a large inland town in the interior, for the winter—a season lovely beyond description. So my daughters enjoyed educational facilities not inferior, perhaps, to those of country towns in England."

"Like most Englishmen, I must confess to having formed incorrect ideas about our colonial possessions. However, I shall have ample time to amend them, if Miss Violet's prophecy comes true."

"Never mind her, Sir Roland," said her mother, stroking the girl's fair hair. "She is a naughty girl, and always says the first thing that comes into her head. It is just as likely that we shall see you back again with a colossal fortune in five years. Mr. Hazelwood that bought Burrawombie did, you know! You remember him, don't you, Frank? And if a bank-failure epidemic sets in, as was once threatened, we may just then be wanting to sell out and go back to Australia to retrench."

"I give everybody fair warning," said Miss Violet, starting up from her mother's side, "that *I* am going to settle permanently in England before that takes place. I couldn't endure returning under those circumstances. As a girl with a 'record,' as that American one said who had danced with the Prince, I might be induced to face George Street and Katoomba again; but not otherwise!"

* * * * * *

Farewells had been said, old friends and old haunts revisited. The whole able-bodied population of Massinger Court, tower and town, had apparently turned out to do honour to their late landlord and employer, and when Sir Roland deposited himself in an engaged carriage by insistence of the veteran station-master, and was, as the phrase runs, "left alone with his thoughts," an involuntary lowering of his animal spirits occurred.

He had, as his friends and acquaintances fully

believed, cut loose from all old associations—"turned himself out of house and home," as some familiarly expressed it—quitted for ever the old hall which had been in the possession of his family in unbroken line since the Conquest, and committed his fortunes to the conditions of a rude, quasi-barbarous country.

And for what? For a most insufficient reason, as all the world thought.

What was the abnormal incident which had brought about this dislocation of his whole life, which had made havoc of all previous aims and prospects? Merely the too highly wrought imagination of a girl—of a silly girl, people would doubtless say.

Well, they could hardly so describe Hypatia Tollemache, who had proved the possession of one of the finest intellects of the day, and had taken almost unprecedented academical honours.

At any rate, she might come under the biting regal deliverance, *Toujours femme varie, bien fol qui s'y fie.* But *was* she changeable? He could not say so with any show of sincerity.

She had been true—too true—to her ideal. Would that she had not been so steadfast to a vain imagining, an emotional craze!

A dream, a vision that she was destined by example, precept, self-sacrifice, what not, to elevate her sex in particular, the toiling masses in general, the helpless poor, the forgotten captives, despairing, tortured, chained to the oar of the blood-stained galley, "Civilization," falsely so called! Confessedly a lofty ideal. Yet how needless a devotion of her glorious beauty, her precious, all too fleeting youth, her divine intellect, to the thankless task of helping those to whom Providence had

denied the power of helping themselves ; of expending these God-given treasures upon feeble or deformed natures, who, when all had been lavished, were less grateful for the abundant bounty than envious of the higher life, grudgingly displeased that more had not been dispensed.

However, the fiat had gone forth. She must be the arbiter of her own fate. He disdained to beg for a final reconsideration of his suit. Only, he could not have borne to remain and continue the daily round of country life, the rides and drives, the tennis and afternoon teas, the fishing, the shooting, when he knew the exact number of pheasants in each spinney, the woodcocks expected in every copse. The hunting was nearly as bad, except for the advantages of a turn more danger.

No ; a new land, a new world, for him ! Complete change and wild adventure ; no ordinary derangement of conditions would medicine the mind diseased which was ever abiding with the form of Roland Massinger. His passage was already secured in one of the staunch seaboats which justify the maritime pride of the Briton ; he was pledged to sail for the uttermost inhabited lands of the South in less than a week's time. The matter settled, he continued to devote himself assiduously to acquiring information, and felt partially at ease as to his future.

The most desirable colony still seemed to be a kind of *ignis fatuus*.

He read blue-books, compilations, extracts from letters of correspondents—all and everything which purported to direct in the right path the undecided emigrant—with the general result of confusing his

mind, and delaying any advance to a purpose which he might have gained. Finally, he fixed, half by chance, upon Britain's farthest southern possession—New Zealand—the Britain of the South, as it had been somewhat pretentiously styled by a Company, more or less historical, which had essayed to monopolize its fertile lands and "civilize" its tameless inhabitants.

In the frame of mind in which Massinger found himself, an account of the war of 1845, in which a Maori patriot threw down the gage of battle to the "might, majesty, and dominion" of England, obstinately resisting her overwhelming power and disciplined troops, aroused his interest, and came to exercise a species of fascination over him.

The valour of the Maori people, their chivalry, their eloquence, their dignity, their delight in war and skill in fortification, impressed him deeply. The Australian colonies had but an uninteresting aboriginal population, small in number and scarcely raised above the lowest races of mankind. They held few attributes valuable to a student in ethnology—and this was one of his strongest predilections—whereas among the warrior tribes of New Zealand there would be endless types available for a philosophical observer.

The nature of the country also appealed to his British habitudes. Fertile lands, running rivers, snow-clad mountains, picturesque scenery, all these chimed in with his earliest predilections, and finally decided his resolution to adopt New Zealand as his abiding-place—that wonderland of the Pacific; that region of everlasting snow, of glaciers, lakes, hot springs, and fathomless sounds, excelling in grandeur the Norwegian

fiords ; of terraces, pink and white—nature's delicatest lace fretwork above fairy lakelets of vivid blue!

It was enough. *Jacta est alea!* Henceforth with the land of Maui the fortunes of Roland Massinger are inextricably mingled.

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Modern arrangements for changing one's hemisphere are much the same in the case of the emigrant Briton whom kind fortune has included in "the classes." For him the sea-change is made delightfully easy. Luxuriously appointed steamers await his choice, distances are apparently shortened. Time is certainly economised. Agreeable society, if not guaranteed, is generally provided. Tradesmen contend for the privilege of loading the traveller with a superfluous, chiefly unsuitable, outfit. Letters of introduction are proffered, often to dwellers in distant colonies, mistaken for adjacent counties.

Advice is volunteered by friends or acquaintances of every imaginable shade of experience, diverse as to conditions and contradictory in tendency.

Firearms of the period, from duck-guns to pocket-pistols, are suggested or presented ; while the regretful tone of farewell irresistibly impresses the mind of the wanderer that, unless a miracle is performed in his favour, he will never revisit the home of his fathers.

From many of these drawbacks to departure our hero freed himself by resolutely declining to discuss the subject in any shape. He admitted the fact, gave no reasons, and assented to many of the opinions as to the patent disadvantage of living out of England. He resisted the outfitter successfully, having been warned by Frank Lexington against taking anything

more than he would have required for a visit to an English country house.

"Take *all* you would take there, but nothing more."

"What! dress clothes, and so on?"

"Of course! People dress much as they do here in all the colonies. If you're asked to dinner here, you wouldn't go in a shooting-coat; neither do they. In the country, in the bush, of course minor allowances are made."

"But guns and pistols surely?"

"Not unless you wish to practise at the sea-birds on the way out, which few of the captains permit nowadays. You will find that you can buy every kind of firearm there at half the price you would pay here—equally good, mostly unused, the property of young men who have been induced to load themselves with unnecessary accommodation for man and beast. Saddlery, harness, agricultural implements, are all included in my list of unnecessaries."

"Then, what *am* I to take?" inquired Massinger, appalled at this stern dismissal of the accepted emigration formula.

"The clothes on your back, a couple of spare suits, a few books for the voyage, and what other articles may be contained in a Gladstone bag and two trunks; all else is vanity, and most assured vexation of spirit."

"And how about money?"

"There you touch the great essential—leaving it to the last, as we often do. Take, say, fifty sovereigns for the voyage—thirty would be ample, but it is as well to leave a margin. And of course half or a quarter of your available capital in the shape of a

bank draft. You will find that it is worth much more, so to speak, than here."

"I mean to invest the greater part of it in land" —with decision.

"All right; as to that, I won't offer an opinion. I know next to nothing about New Zealand. Look out when you *do* buy. Some fellow told me there was trouble with the native titles; and lawsuits about land are no joke, as we have reason to know."

"Good-bye, my dear fellow," said our hero; "I shall always be grateful for your valuable hints. I hate the word 'advice.'" And as this happened in London, the two young men had dined together at the Reform Club, of which Massinger was a member, and gone to the theatre afterwards, wisely reflecting that such an opportunity might not again occur for a considerable period.

Before the day of departure he received, among others, a letter of feminine form and superscription, which read as follows:—

"MY DEAR SIR ROLAND,

"As you are betaking yourself to the ends of the earth, after the unreasoning fashion which men affect, you won't be alarmed at my affectionate mode of address. I really *have* a strong friendly interest in your welfare, though the nature of such a feeling on a girl's part is generally suspected. Perhaps, as you cannot get over your temporary grief about Hypatia, you are right to do something desperate. She will respect you all the more for this piece of foolishness. (Excuse me.) Women mostly do, if they have hearts (some haven't, of course), but they themselves generally

believe they are not worth any serious sacrifice. A really 'nice' woman is about the best prize going, if a man can get her; only the mistake he makes is in not knowing that there are lots of other women in the world—'fish in the sea,' etc.—who are certain to appreciate him if they get a chance, so nearly as good, or so alike in essentials, that he would hardly find any difference after a year or two.

"So, for the present, you are right to go away and found more Englands, and chop down trees, and fight with wild beasts—are there any in New Zealand, or only natives? Doing all this with a view of knocking all the nonsense, as we girls say, out of your head. Time will probably cure you, as it has done many another man. With us women—foolish creatures!—more time is generally needed; why, I'm sure I don't know. Perhaps because we can't smoke or drink, in our dark hours, like you men when you are thrown over.

"I wish you luck, anyhow. Some day when you come back—for I refuse to believe you will never see Massinger Court again—you will tell me if I am a true prophet. My tip is this:—

"Within the next five years Hypatia will have got tired of slumming, lecturing, teaching, and generally sacrificing herself for the heathen, and will hear reason; or you will find a *replica* of her in Australia or Kamtschatka, or wherever your wandering steps may lead, who will do nearly or quite as well to ornament your humble home.

"And now, after this infliction of genuine friendly counsel, I will conclude with a little personal item which may explain my protestations of merely platonic

interest in your concerns. I have been engaged to Harry Merivale for nearly three years. It was a dead secret, as he was too poor to marry. In those days you once did him a good turn, he told me. *Now* he has got his step, and his old aunt has come round, so we are to be *married next month.*

"I am sure you will give me joy, and believe me ever,

"Your sincere friend and elder sister,

"BESSIE BRANKSOME."

CHAPTER IV

WITH the exception of certain yachting trips, Mr. Roland Massinger, as he now called himself, having decided to drop the title for the present, had no experience of ocean voyaging. A well-found yacht, presided over by an owner of royal hospitality and fastidious friendships, with carefully selected companions, and the pick of the mercantile marine for a crew, leaves little to be desired. Fêted at every port, and free to stay, or glide onwards as the sea-bird o'er the foam—such a cruise affords, perhaps, the ideal holiday.

But this was a far different experience. A shipload of perfect strangers, many of them not indifferent, like himself, to changing scene and environment, but unwilling exiles, leaving all they held dear, and murmuring secretly, if not openly, against Fate, presented no cheering features. The weather was cold and stormy; while, in crossing the Bay of Biscay, such a wild outcry of wind and wave greeted them, that with battened-down hatches, a deeply laden vessel, frightened passengers and overworked stewards, he had every facility afforded him for speculation as to whether his Antarctic enterprise would not be prematurely accounted

for by a telegram in the *Times*, headed "Another shipwreck. All hands supposed to be lost."

This, and other discouraging thoughts, passed through the mind of the voyager during the forty-eight hours of supreme discomfort, not unmingled with danger, while the gale ceased not to menace the labouring vessel. However, being what is called "a good sailor," and his present frame of mind rendering him resigned, if not defiant, he endeared himself to the officers by refraining from useless questions, and awaiting with composure the change which, as they were not fated to go to the bottom on that occasion, took place in due course. How the storm abated, how the weather cleared; how, as the voyage progressed, the passengers became companionable, has often been narrated in similar chronicles.

The mountains of New Zealand were finally sighted, and the good ship *Arrawatta* steamed into the lovely harbour of Auckland one fine morning, presenting to the eager gaze of the wayfarers the charms of a landscape which in many respects equals, and in others surpasses, the world-famed haven of Sydney.

It was early dawn when they floated through the Rangitoto channel between the island so called—the three-coned peak of which, with scoria-shattered flanks, denoted volcanic origin—and the North Head. Passing this guardian headland, "a most living landscape," the more entrancing from contrast to the endless ocean plain which for so many a day had limited his vision, was spread out before the voyager's eager and delighted gaze. Land and water, hill and dale, bold headlands and undulating verdurous slopes, combined to form a panorama of enchanting variety.

The city of Auckland, which he had come so far to see, rose in a succession of graduated eminences from the waters of a sheltered bay. Bold headlands alternated with winding creeks and estuaries; low volcanic hills clothed with dazzling verdure, ferny glens and copses which reminded him of the last day's "cock" shooting at the Court; while trim villas and even more pretentious mansions gave assurance that here the modern Vikings, having wearied of the stormy seas, had made themselves a settled home and abiding-place. Glen and pine-crested headland, yellow beach and frowning cliff, wharves and warehouses, skiffs and coasters, the smoke of steamers, all told of the adjuncts of the Anglo-Saxon—that absorbing race which has rarely been dislodged from suitable foothold.

On the voyage Massinger had noticed a good-looking man, about his own age, in whom, in spite of studiously plain attire, he recognized, by various slight marks and tokens, the English aristocrat. Most probably the stranger had made similar deductions, as he had commenced their first conversation with an unreserved condemnation of the weather, after a passing depreciation of the food, concluding by a query in the guise of a statement.

"Not been this way before?"

Massinger admitted the fact.

"Going to settle—farm—sheep and all that—take up land, eh!"

"I thought of doing so, unless I change my plans on arrival. I suppose it's as good as any of the Australian colonies?"

"Beastly holes, generally speaking, for a man who's

lived in the world. Don't know that New Zealand's worse than the rest of the lot. Australia—all black fellows — kangaroos — sandy wastes — droughts and floods. Burnt up first—flood comes and drowns survivors. So they tell me!"

"But New Zealand is fertile and well watered; all the books say so."

"Books d——d rot—lies, end to end; must go yourself to find out. My third trip."

"Then you like it?" pursued the emigrant, stimulated by this wholesale depreciation of a country which all other accounts represented as the Promised Land.

"Have to like it," answered the other; "billet in this infernal New Zealand Company. Wish I'd broke my leg the day I applied. Heard of it, I suppose?"

Mr. Massinger had indeed heard of it. Had read blue-books, correspondence, letters, articles, and reviews, in which the New Zealand Land Company was alternately represented as a providential agency for saving the finest country in the world for British occupation, for finding homes on smiling farms for the crowded population of Great Britain, for Christianizing the natives as well as instructing them in the arts of peace; or, as a syndicate of greedy monopolists, insidiously working for the accumulation of vast estates, and oppressing a noble and interesting race, whose lands they proposed to confiscate under a miserable pretence of sale and barter.

"I *have* heard and read a good deal of the proceedings of the New Zealand Land Company; but accounts differ, so that they are perplexing to a stranger."

"Naturally; all interested people—one myself," said his new acquaintance. "But, as we've got so far,

permit me?" and extracting a card from a neat *porte-monnaie*, he handed it to Massinger, who, glancing at it, perceived the name of

MR. DUDLEY SLYDE,

Secretary to the New Zealand Land Company, Auckland and Christchurch.

"Happy to make your acquaintance," he said. "I am not sure that I have a card. My name is Massinger."

"What! Massinger of the Court, Herefordshire? Heard generally you had sold your place and gone in for colonizing. What the devil—er—excuse me. Reasons, no doubt; but if I had the luck to be the owner of Massinger Court—*born* to it, mind you—I'd have seen all the colonies swallowed up by an earthquake before I'd have left England. No! not for all New Zealand, from the 'Three Kings' to Cape Palliser."

"If all Englishmen felt alike in that respect, we shouldn't have had an empire, should we?" suggested the other. "Somebody must take the chances of war and adventure."

"*Somebody else* it would have been in my case," promptly replied Mr. Slyde. "However, matter of taste. Every man manage his own affairs. Great maxim. And as mine are mixed up in this blessed company, if you'll look me up in Auckland, I'll put you up to a wrinkle or two in the matter of land-purchase—of course you'll want to buy land; otherwise *you* might get sold—you see? Stock Exchange with a 'boom' on nothing to it."

The transfer of Mr. Massinger's trunks in a four-wheeler to a comfortable-appearing hostelry was effected with no more than average delay. An appetizing breakfast, wherein a well-cooked mutton chop was preceded by a grilled flounder, and flanked by eggs and toast, convinced him that the Briton of the South had no occasion to fear degeneration as a consequence of unsuitable living. After which he felt his spirits distinctly improved in tone, and his desire to explore the surroundings of this distant outpost of the wandering Briton took shape and motion.

The town of Auckland, having a few reasonably good buildings and a large number of cottages, cabins, and other shelters in every gradation, from the incipient terrace to the Maori "whare," was about the average size of English country towns. No great difference in the number of houses. Not much in that of the inhabitants. But there was an unmistakable departure in the air and bearing of these last. The recognized orders and classes of British life, hardly distinguishable from their British types, were all there. Rich and poor, gentle and simple. The farmer, the country gentleman, the tradesman, the lounger, the doctor, the banker, the merchant, the peasant, and the navvy, all were there, with their pursuits and avocations written in large text on form and face, speech and bearing. But he marked, as before stated, a certain departure from the home manner. And it was grave and essential. Whether high or low, each man's features in that heterogeneous crowd were informed, even illumined, with the glow of hope, the light of sanguine expectation.

Once landed on the shores of this magnificent

appanage of Britain, so nearly lost to the empire, dull must he be of soul, narrow of vision, who did not feel his heart bound within him and each pulse throb at the thought of the gorgeous possibilities which lay before him. Before the labourer, who received a fourfold wage, and rejoiced in such plenteous provision for his family as he had never dreamed of in the mother-land. Before the farmer, who saw his way to opulence and landed estate, as he surveyed the transplanted food crops growing and burgeoning as in a glorified garden which "drank the rains of heaven at will." Before the professional man, whose high fees and abundant practice would soon absolve him from the necessity of professional toil. Before the capitalist, who saw in the steady rise of land-values, whether in town or country, an illimitable field for judicious investment, ending with an early retirement and at least *one* fortune.

The town sloped upwards from the sea, thus necessitating steep gradients for the streets. The main street, broad and well laid out, was more level at its inception, though Massinger saw by the hill immediately above it that he would not have to go far before his Alpine experiences would stand him in good stead. This was entirely to his mind; so, stepping out with determination, he reached the summit of Mount Eden. Here he paused, and indeed the pace at which he had breasted the ascent, after the inaction of the voyage, rendered it far from inexpedient to admire the view. What a prospect it was! He stood upon an isthmus with an ocean on either hand. Far as eye could range, the boundless South Pacific lay glowing and shimmering under

the midday sun; on the hither side, the harbour with flags of all nations and ships from every sea.

The roadstead by which the *Arrawatta* had entered, appeared like a land-locked inlet. The outlines of the Greater and Lesser Barrier were plainly visible, as also the lofty ridge of Cape Colville; other islands and headlands loomed faintly in the shadowy horizon. Westward lay the great harbour of Manukau and the Waitakerei Ranges.

Weary with scanning the gulfs of the Hauraki and Waitemata, as also the far-seen ranges of the Upper Thames, holding stores of precious minerals, he allowed his eye to rest upon the fields and farm-houses, villages and meadows, overspreading the levels and sheltered beneath the volcanic hills. Under his feet what marvellous revelations of fertility met his gaze! The volcanic formation was evidenced by the shape of the conical eminences by which he was surrounded. He counted more than a dozen. In all, the extinct craters were perfect in form, though covered on side and base with richest herbage. In these he detected most of the British fodder plants, growing in unusual luxuriance. Observing the flattened summits and remains of graded terraces, he found on inspection that the hand of man had adapted these works of nature to his needs.

Scarped, terraced, and perfect of circumvallation, the remains of mouldering palisades indicated the abodes of a warlike people, who had in long-past days converted these hilltops into fortresses, affording effective means of defence, as well as a wide outlook, in case of invasion.

Here for generations, perhaps centuries uncounted,

had this vigorous, agricultural, warlike people—for such by his course of reading he knew the Maori nation to be—lived and died, fought and feasted, garnered their simple harvest, and lived contentedly on the products of land and sea.

Proud and stubborn, brave to recklessness, they naturally became jealous of the gradually extending occupation of their land by the encroaching white race. But why should such a people not be sensitive, even to the madness of battle, against overwhelming odds? They had won their country from the deep, traversing wide wastes of waters in canoes but ill adapted for storm and tempest. They had discovered this fair region—cultivated, peopled it. Why should they not resist a foreign occupation to the death? And as he looked around on the magnificent prospect spread before, around, he could not help recalling the lines of the immortal bard—

> "Where's the coward that would not dare
> To fight for such a land?"

Returning to his hotel, he chanced to meet several groups of this much-exploited people, and was much impressed by the stalwart frames and bold, independent bearing of the men.

Many of the women, too, were handsome, and among the half-caste girls and young men were forms and faces which would have compared favourably with the finest models of ancient Greece. One young man of that colour attracted his attention. He had been reading on board ship that wonderful romance of Michael Scott's, wherein the spacious times of old, and the planter-life of the West Indian Islands, are

limned with such prodigality of colour, such wealth of humorous perception, such power of pathos. As this young man came swinging along with a companion down the street, cigar in mouth, he could not help saying to himself, "There's the young pirate captain out of 'Tom Cringle's Log.'" He was taller even than that fascinating Spanish desperado, but there was a strong family likeness.

"What a man he is!" thought Massinger. "Six feet three or four, if an inch, broad-shouldered, deep-chested—a wondrous combination of strength and activity; supple as a panther, with the muscle of a Farnese Hercules. As to his features, the eyes and teeth are splendid, the complexion a clear bronze, hardly darker than that of Southern Europe."

Altogether he doubted if he had ever seen such a remarkable masculine specimen of personal grace and beauty. "This is truly a remarkable country," he soliloquized. "If the climate and soil can raise men like this, what may not be hoped from the introduction of a purely British race, with all the modern advantages of civilization?"

Thus pondering, he managed to discover his hotel, where he set himself resolutely to sketch out a plan of future operation, before completing which, he deemed it advisable to deliver some of the letters of introduction with which he had been plentifully supplied. One of the more immediate effects of this action was the outflow of an inordinate quantity of advice, from the recipients of which, as a newly arrived Englishman, he was deemed to be in urgent need.

These exhortations were compendious and exhaustive, but failed in effect upon him from their

very affluence, so much of the suggestive information being in direct contrast to that which immediately preceded it.

Having admitted that he intended to purchase a large block of land for farm and grazing purposes, it was astonishing how much interest he excited among the mercantile or pastoral magnates to whom he had been accredited.

"Have nothing to do with that infernal New Zealand Company," said one grizzled colonist, "or you'll never cease to regret it. They're all in the same boat with certain British members of Parliament and the local political gang, to rob these poor devils of natives of their tribal lands. Title? They haven't a rag. Some artful devil of a Maori—and they are not behindhand in that line—pretends to sell the lands of his tribe, for a few barrels of gunpowder or cases of Yankee axes—of course signs a bogus deed."

"But isn't he their accredited agent?" queried our hero. "They would be bound by his act."

"Agent be hanged!" quoth the pioneer impetuously. "This allotment belongs to me; have I a right therefore to sell the whole town? Though, between you and me, there are men in business here who would have a try at it, if they could delude one of you innocent new arrivals into taking his word and paying over the cash."

"I trust I'm not quite so innocent," replied Massinger, smiling, "as to make purchases without due inquiry."

"Depends upon whom you inquire from," said his experienced friend. "Advice is cheap, or rather dear enough, when the giver has an axe to grind."

"Then how am I to find out, if no one is to be trusted in this Arcadia of yours?"

"Devilish few that I know of," rejoined the senior. "The Government officials and the Land Commissioners are, perhaps, the safest. They have some character to lose, and are fairly impartial."

"After what you have said, may I venture to ask counsel from you?"—instinctively trusting the open countenance and steady eye of the pioneer.

"Oh! certainly; you needn't take it, of course. Don't be in a hurry to invest; that's my first word. The next, *buy from the Government;* they have a title —that is, nearly always—and are bound to support you in it."

"But suppose their title is disputed? What will they do?"

"Take forcible possession, which means *war*. And Maori war—savages, as it's the fashion to call them—is no joke. And mark my word, if they're not more careful than they have been lately, 'the deil will gae ower Jock Wabster.'" Here the speaker lapsed into his native Doric, showing that though half a century had rolled by since he first anchored in the Bay of Islands, and the Southern tongue had encroached somewhat, he had not forgotten the hills of bonnie Scotland or the expressive vernacular of his youth.

"But surely the tribe, whichever it may happen to be, could not stand against British regulars?"

"So you may think. But I was in the thick of Honi Heke's affair in '45, and I could tell you stories that would surprise you. You must remember that, as a people, the New Zealanders are among the most

warlike races upon earth, inured for centuries past to every species of bloodshed and rapine, and bred up in the belief that a man is a warrior or nothing. Fear, they know not the name of. They are wily strategists, as you will observe, when you see their 'pahs,' and the nature of their primeval forests gives them an immense advantage for cover or concealment."

"Then you think there may be another war?" inquired Massinger, with some interest.

"Think! I'm sure of it. Things can't go on as they are. We're in for it sooner or later, and all because the Governor, who means well, lets himself be led by half a dozen politicians, in spite of the advice of the old hands and the friendly chiefs, our allies, who have as much sense and policy as all the ministry put together."

"But will not they always naturally lean to their own countrymen?"

"Far from it—that's the very reason. Most of these chiefs have tribal feuds and hereditary enemies, as bitter and remorseless as ever my Hieland ancestors enjoyed themselves with. Others, like Waka Nene, since they were Christianized by the early missionaries, have cast in their lot with the whites. They fought shoulder to shoulder with us, and will again, even if they disapprove of our policy."

"What an extraordinary people!" said Massinger. "And if war breaks out, as you think likely, what will become of the colonists?"

"They will have to fight for it. Murders and every kind of devilry will result. But we have fought before, and can again, I suppose. These islands are going to be another Britain; and even if there has been some

folly and injustice, England always means well, and we are not going to give them up. 'No, sir,' as my American friends say."

"I rather like the prospect," said Massinger. "A good straightforward war is a novelty in these too-peaceful days. If I had any notion of leaving New Zealand, which I have not, this would decide me. Good morning, and many thanks. I will see you again before I decide on anything fresh."

"There's grit in that young yellow," quoth the ex-skipper, as he walked out. "Bar accidents, he's the sort of man to make his mark in a new country."

The man so referred to walked down the street, deeply pondering.

"I have got into the land of romance," thought he, "without any manner of doubt. What a pull for a fellow in these degenerate days! It raises one's spirits awfully. In addition to such a country for grass and roots as I never dreamt of it, to think of there being every probability of a war! A real war! It reminds one of the 'Last of the Mohicans,' and all the joys of youth. We shall have 'Hawkeye,' 'Uncas,' and 'Chingachgook' turning up before we know where we are. Oh! *fortunati nimium*—— Halloa! what have we here?"

What he saw at that moment was something which had hardly entered into his calculations as a peaceful colonist. But it was strangely in accord with the warning tone of Captain Macdonald's last deliverance. A section of the Ngatiawa tribe, which had visited Auckland on the matter of a petition to the Governor concerning the violation of a reserve, the same being *tapu* under ceremonies of a particularly awful and

sacred nature, were indulging themselves with a war-dance by way of dissipating the tedium necessitated by official delay. A crowd of the townspeople had collected at the corner of Shortland Street, while the tattooed braves were with the utmost gravity going through the evolutions of their horrific performance. Chiefly unclothed, they stamped and roared, grimaced and threatened, as in actual preparation for conflict. Musket in hand, they leaped and yelled like demoniacs; their countenances distorted, the eyes turned inward, their tongues protruded as with wolfish longing. Each man was possessed by a fiend, as it seemed to Massinger, who gazed upon the actors with intense interest. The performance, hardly new to the majority of the spectators, failed to impress one of them with due respect. He remarked upon the pattern tattooed on the thigh of a huge native in front of him to a comrade, ending with a rude jest in the Maori tongue. It was a *mauvaise plaisanterie* in good sooth. Turning like a wild bull upon the astonished offender, and furious at the insult offered to his *moko*—sacred as the totem of an Indian chief—the Ngatiawa dashed the butt-end of his musket against his breast, sending him on to his back with such violence that he had to be assisted to rise, stunned and bewildered. The Maoris wheeled like one man, and formed in line, while the leader shouted *Kapai!* as they marched through the crowd to their camp, chanting a refrain which no doubt might have been freely rendered, "Wha daur meddle wi' me?"

This incident impressed our Englishman more than weeks of description could have done, with the peculiar characteristics of the strange race among whom

he had elected to dwell. Pride and sensitiveness, to the point of frenzy, were evidently among the attributes which had to be considered at risk of personal damage.

He was, however, surprised at the cool way in which the crowd had taken their comrade's discomfiture, and said as much to a respectable-looking man who was walking down the street with him.

"We're not afraid of the beggars," returned the townsman, "as we'll show 'em by-and-by. But it's no good starting before you're ready. That fellow was half-drunk, and it served him right. There's a big tribe at the back of these chaps, and they're in a dangerous humour about that cursed Waitara block. That's why the crowd wouldn't back the white man up. He's only a wharf-loafer, when all's said and done."

This explained the affair in great part. Doubtless a *mêlée* would have ensued if any hot-blooded individuals in the street had commenced an attack upon the Maoris. An obstinate and by no means bloodless fight must have arisen. Doubtless, in the end, the whites would have conquered. Then the tribe would have murdered outlying settlers, or attacked the town. The military would have been engaged. The war-torch, once applied, might have lighted up a conflagration over the whole island, necessitating an expenditure of blood and treasure which years of peace would have been insufficient to repay. All, too, occasioned by the idiotic folly of a worthless member of society.

Revolving such reflections, which, with other ideas and considerations, effectually excluded the image of Hypatia, Roland Massinger betook himself to his

hotel, having discovered, as many a gentleman unfortunate in his love affairs has done before him, that this life of ours holds sensational interests, which, if not sufficing to assuage the pangs of unrequited love, yet act as a potent anodyne.

To such an extent did the subject of the diplomacy urgently required at such a juncture excite his interest, that he cast about for some means of visiting the camp of these strange people, and learning more about their embassy, which had so suddenly acquired importance in his eyes. Having fully decided upon making New Zealand his home, and becoming fired with ambition to aid in the development of this wonderland of the South, he had addressed himself on the voyage with commendable diligence to the study of the Maori language and traditions. Thus, though properly diffident as to his colloquial powers, he was in a position to more easily acquire a practical proficiency than if he had been without a preparatory course of study.

He had finished his lunch, and was enjoying his smoke on the balcony, gazing over the harbour, of which the elevated position of the Grand Hotel offered a view which he never ceased to admire, when he recognized the sonorous voice of his marine friend of the morning, Captain Macdonald.

"Yes, indeed! Ticklish situation—you may well say so. Jack Maori sitting on a powder barrel, filling cartridges and smoking his pipe. I've often seen 'em —nothing to it."

"I agree with you, Macdonald; you and I have been long enough here to know how to deal with Maoris. The Government ought to see that the touchy

beggars are not needlessly set up. I lost a dozen valuable blocks here in 1840 because a young fool of a pakeha didn't know the difference between taihai-ing (stealing) and mere taking away—tiaki-ing."

"Why, how was that?"

"Well, he said that Te Hira, the young chief of all the coast about there, was 'taihai-ing the goahore' —instead of tiaki-ing. He felt affronted—sulked, of course, and just as I fully expected to get all Shortland Crescent for—well, decidedly cheap—he shut up his mouth like a vice, and wouldn't sell a yard of his land. It shows what a queer people they are, when a grammatical error has such far-reaching consequences."

"Consequences!" echoed his companion; "I should think so. But I never heard of that adventure of yours."

"Well, it made a difference of about five thousand a year to me, according to the present price of the land. The Government got it afterwards, and cut it up into town lots. What noble buildings are on them now!"

"Look here, Lochiel," said the sea-captain; "suppose we walk over to the camp and have a *Korĕro*. I know this chief, and we can both patter Maori. It might do good to explain matters, and none of us want to see Auckland under martial law."

"It's just a grand idea!" said the other colonist, a tall distinguished-looking elderly man, whose spare upright figure suggested military training; once careless enough of danger, but now for some years declined to the more peaceful vocation of a merchant—one of the sea-roving, fearless breed of adventurers peculiar to

Britain, whose wide-reaching mercantile transactions have included the mobilizing of armies and the levying of taxes; "in whose lumber-rooms," as in those of the Great Company now merged in Imperial rule, "are the thrones of ancient kings."

Here Massinger advanced, and bringing himself within the ken of the speakers, was at once introduced to "my old friend, Mr. Lochiel," as "Mr. Massinger, a gentleman who had come to settle among them."

"Very pleased to make his acquaintance," said the tall man, whose shrewd, intellectual, kindly face impressed him most favourably. "If he is of my mind, he will have reason to congratulate himself on his choice of a colony. I have never regretted my decision, and the greater part of my life has been spent here."

"You seem to have a diplomatic difficulty on hand," remarked Massinger, "if I may judge from an experience this morning."

"Oh! you witnessed that affair in Shortland Street, did you? My friend and I were just about to walk over to the Maori camp and get their notion of it. We're both 'Pakeha Maoris' of long standing, and the chief, Te Rangitake, has heard our names before. Would you care to accompany us?"

"There is nothing I should like better. I begin to wish for a more intimate acquaintance with our native friends, and trust to be an authority on their manners and customs by-and-by."

"It's odds but that we may know a lot more about their ways before long," said Captain Macdonald; "more than we shall like, if I don't mistake. In the mean time we had better look them up at the Kiki."

The newly made friends—for such they were fated to be in the after-time—walked on a path parallel to the sea, over several deep ravines crossed by temporary bridges, until they came to a clear space, in front of which a bold bluff looked out upon the harbour. Here a collection of huts, made of the *raupo*, or reed-rush, and the smoke of fires, denoted the presence of the ambassadors of the former lords of the soil.

"*Haere Mai! Haere Mai!*" was the cry with which they were greeted, which Massinger rightly interpreted as a note of welcome. His companions replied with a phrase which appeared to be the correct antiphonal rejoinder. As they reached the camp, in which they noted a number of women and children, it was evident that they were favourably known to the *hapu*, or family section, of the by no means inconsiderable Ngatiawa tribe.

The chief himself, an intelligent and determined-looking man, thus addressed them—

"Welcome! My welcome is to you, captain! You have been a friend to the Ngatiawa as long ago as when Honii Heke cut down the flagstaff; and my welcome is to you—Herekino. When your ship was in Kororarika, your heart was to our tribe."

"My salutation," said Macdonald, "is to you, O Te Rangitake! My friend and I, also this Pakeha Rangatira, have come to you for words in this quarrel of Otakou in Auckland to-day. It is folly—let it not breed quarrels between us. It was the act of a nobody, a *tutua*.

"The heart of Otakou is sore," replied the chief, gravely. "He was mocked by the pakeha. His

mana was injured. He wished for *utu*, but I told him there were matters to be considered; that the tribe was in *runanga* concerning the Waitara land—our land, the land of my people. After that he can take his musket in his hand. It is his own affair."

"It was a folly, a child's trick. The pakeha was beaten by him. He fell on the ground. His countrymen would not defend him. He had done wrong. Were they afraid of forty or fifty Maoris? No! They knew that the pakeha had done wrong. They would not lift a finger for him."

"It is well," said the chief; and advancing a few steps, he spoke rapidly to the insulted warrior, who sat moodily alone. "The Rangatira with the white man says the pakeha has done wrong. His people disown him. The matter is ended." Here he broke a wand which he carried in his hand in two pieces, in token that the decision was complete. Upon which the countenance of the insulted Maori cleared visibly; he arose, and walked to the other side of the camp.

And now Mr. Lochiel commenced a conversation in Maori with the chief, which evidently was more important, and, as it proceeded, became deeply interesting. The flashing eye of the chief, his impetuous words, his frowning brow, and ever and anon the deep, resonant tones of his voice, intimated so much.

Captain Macdonald translated from time to time, for the information of Massinger, who became anxious to learn more of the subject of the important conference, for such it evidently was. The colonist spoke

calmly, but with weight and effect, as was shown by the quick rejoinders and deeply moved expression of countenance of his interlocutor.

"It is about this Waitara block which the Government has bought lately," said Captain Macdonald. "He disputes the right of Teira to sell it; says that he will *not* acknowledge any sale or transfer. That the land belongs, in named and measured portions, to individuals and families in the tribe. That no single person has the right to dispose of it. That the whole tribe must unite, and through him, their chief and *Ariki*, give formal assent to the sale. That he is anxious to be at peace with the Governor and our people, but that he will shed his blood rather than part with this land."

"But surely there must have been official correspondence about the sale of this important block?" said Massinger. "Land is not handed over anywhere like a ton of potatoes."

"To do the Government justice, there has been correspondence enough and to spare," replied Mr. Lochiel. "The chief says he had a letter from the Colonial Secretary that Teira's land (as alleged) would be bought by the Governor. That his rule was that each man was to have the 'word' about his own land —that the word of a man with no claim would not be listened to."

"But that is the whole business, as I understand the matter. The chief says it is *not* the seller's land, though he may have a separate portion."

"That is what Te Rangitake wrote. 'Friend! Salutation to you! I will not agree to our bedroom being sold (I mean Waitara here), for this bed belongs

to the whole of us! And do not you be in haste to give the money. If you give the money in secret, you will get no land. Do not suppose that this is folly on my part. All I have to say to you, O Governor! is that none of this land will be given to you—*akore, akore, akore* (never, never, never)—while I live.'"

As these words rang out until they reached a shout of defiance, the greater part of the assembled warriors started to their feet, and standing round their chief and the three white men, looked as if but a very little additional excitement would suffice to lead them to death or glory, commencing with the slaughtering of any chance pakehas whom they might meet.

"This was not by any means intended for a declaration of war," Mr. Lochiel averred. "The Maoris are very demonstrative in oratory, and have always been in the habit of using much parliamentary discussion; even of giving full and official notice before war is actually declared."

But as the three Europeans wended their way back to the city, the countenances of the older men expressed grave doubt—even expectation of evil.

"As sure as we stand here," said Mr. Lochiel, coming to a halt, and looking over the waters of the harbour, lying calm and peaceful in the rich tints of the setting sun, "and as certainly as that sun will rise to-morrow, there will be trouble—war to the knife, I believe—if the Government persists in paying that fellow Teira the cash and claiming the whole block."

"I agree with you," said his friend. "How the Governor, who has stood firm in so many similar cases, should have allowed himself to be hoodwinked in this, passes my knowledge. These Ngatiawas will

refuse to quit their land ; and the moment the surveyors go on it, there will be the devil to pay."

"But what can they do?" queried Massinger. "Will they kill the survey party?"

"No! certainly not. They rarely act in a hurry. They will probably use merely passive resistance at first. But resist they will. You may take their oath of that."

"And if that has no effect?"

"Then they will fight in earnest. They are devils incarnate when their blood is up. I have seen many an inter-tribal raid and battle ; I don't wish to see another. But there will be murder in cold blood—killing in hot blood, with all the devilry of savage warfare. The blood of the men, women, and children certain to be sacrificed before the campaign is over, will be on the heads of those whose folly and greed provoke the outbreak."

"And is there no means of arresting this mad action?" said the younger man. "Will not leading colonists take the initiative in preventing a flagrant injustice—this removal of landmarks which must be paid for in blood?"

"All depends upon whether the peace party in the House is strong enough to defeat the machinery of the land-jobbers. If not, one thing is certain. We shall see the beginning of a war of which it will be hard to predict the end—much more what may happen in the meantime. And now, if you and my old friend here will dine with me this evening, I will promise not to sell you any land, or otherwise take advantage of your presumed inexperience as a newly arrived lamb among us wolves of colonists."

Nothing could possibly have been suggested more in accordance with our hero's tastes and inclinations, and he congratulated himself on his prospects of gaining real reliable acquaintance with New Zealand politics. This arrangement was duly carried out, and the three friends walked together to Mr. Lochiel's house. He had begged them to dispense with any change of attire, as the dusk was closing in and Mrs. Lochiel was absent on a visit. When they reached the mansion, beautifully situated on a headland overlooking the harbour, its size and appointments were a surprise to Massinger, doubtful of the class of habitation which they were approaching.

"Yes," said the venerable pioneer, as they stood in the handsomely furnished drawing-room, replete with pictures, casts, curios—a most generous assortment of *objets d'art*, evidently the fruits of a lengthened continental ramble; "things are much changed since Thornton and I bought that island you see out under the line of moon-rays, from the reigning chief, more than thirty years ago. He and I lived there for many a day, chiefly upon pork, fish, potatoes, and oysters. How well I remember the good old chief, to whom we 'belonged' as Pakeha Maoris, and the first night we spent there!"

"And at that time had none of the land here been sold to the Government?" asked Massinger.

"Not one solitary acre, where Auckland now stands—'nor roof, nor latched door,' to quote the old song. And now, look at it."

Mr. Massinger did look across the suburb which divided the grounds of their host's residence from the city of Auckland, with its thirty thousand inhabitants,

its churches, gardens, court-houses, public libraries, vice-regal mansion, and warehouses. The lights of the city showed an area even larger than he had at first supposed it to be. The ships in the well-filled harbour, the steamers with their variously coloured illuminants, completed the picture of a thriving settlement, destined to perform its function notably as a component part of the British Empire.

"This is hardly progress," he exclaimed. "It is *transformation!*"

CHAPTER V

FULLY convinced that it behoved him to walk warily, and to consider well before he committed himself to a purchase involving the investment of his capital and the necessity of residence in a district which might be exposed to the horrors of war, Massinger determined to consult all available friends and acquaintances, as well as to examine for himself. He wished to make sure not only of the validity of title, but of all collateral conditions likely to affect his occupation. Still, an estate of some sort he was determined to acquire.

He had taken daily walks in every direction from his headquarters, and the more he saw of this wonderful country, the more favourably he was disposed to think of its fertility, salubrity, and general adaptation to the needs of an Anglo-Saxon race.

"What an astonishing thing it seems," he told himself, musingly, "that these marvellous islands should have remained unknown, unoccupied wastes, and, but for a few tribes of splendid barbarians, unpeopled, until the early years of the present century! Providence has marked them out for another home of our restless race. Another England, beneath the Cross of the South! An outlet, how gracious and timely, for the 'hardly entreated brother' who so often

languishes in older lands for lack of free scope for his energies! Such soil, such rivers, such scenery, such a climate! What should we think at home if tens of thousands of acres of land of this quality were offered to our farmers at peppercorn rents or nominal purchase-money?"

Then, not intending to confine himself entirely to one set of advisers, he decided to look up Mr. Dudley Slyde. He found that gentleman in an upper chamber of a large building, writing letters which looked like despatches, with an industry in strong contrast to his *dolce far niente* attitude during the voyage. However, he promptly relinquished his task, and, taking a chair near a press marked "Native Titles," drew forth a box of cigars, and, lighting one, exhorted his guest to do the same.

"Writing home," he said apologetically; "last day of the mail—have to send all sorts of beastly Reports. Just told my directors country's going to the devil; wrapped it up decently, of course. Bad business, this Waitara block—shockingly managed; don't half like the look of things. Heard of it, I suppose?"

"Yes, indeed. I witnessed a passage of arms also between one of the Maori deputation and a drunken white man. It appeared to me significant of the temper of the native population."

"D——d bad temper generally. Touchy first, and dangerous, not to say bloodthirsty, afterwards. Queer people."

"In some respects, certainly. But is there no way of persuading them to sell their land? It would be better for them and everybody else not to lock up this fertile country."

"Of course there is, if you go the right way about it. But can't be done by main force. 'Wants brains and straight going. That's what we're short of. Governor right enough, if it comes to that, but been 'had' in this last affair."

"The Waitara block?"

"Precisely. I see you're getting colonized. Remember what Bailey Junior said about Mrs. Todgers' fish?"

"'Don't eat none of it?' I remember. But how does that apply?"

"Just this much. Don't you touch an acre of that rich and well-watered area, if you get it for nothing. There'll be bloodshed over it, take my word. And carrying on Master Bailey's warning, any eating done on the premises is more likely than not to be at the expense, literally and *personally*, of the incautious purchaser."

"In my—I was going to say, in my opinion—but I refrain, being unable to form one. But perhaps I may go so far as to quote old colonists—that there is certain to be trouble if this so-called purchase is attempted to be carried out. At this stage could it not be prevented?"

"Most certainly it could; but when a policy has been weak up to a certain point, the responsible head is apt to square the account by being obstinate in the wrong place. That's the matter now."

"And the end?"

"God only knows. If the Government persists in pushing through this bogus sale, against the warnings of Te Rangitake—who, in addition to his being a high chief, and the largest holder in this said block, is a

deuced ugly customer—I'll lay twenty to one that there'll be the devil to pay."

"But the Government surely won't call out the troops in the face of the reports of Busby and McLean, and the opinion of Maning, anent native titles?"

"People of ordinary sense would think so, but they're 'running amok' just now, and what between the Company, the Provincial Council, the Ministry, and the Governor, who has been over-persuaded or duped in the matter, I believe that war, and nothing else, will be the outcome. The British Government has acquired much territory in different parts of the world, but this is going to be one of the biggest land-bills in men and money that Old England ever drew cheque for. That's what I'm telling my directors at home, and I hope they'll like the news."

Here Mr. Slyde resumed his pen, and with a brief adieu the chance friends separated.

* * * * * *

Discovering from reliable sources that nothing in the way of battle, murder, and sudden death was likely to take place for a few weeks, Mr. Massinger decided that he would pay a visit to those wondrous lakes of which he had heard and read. He had pictured in his mind, how often, the strange aspect of a country where snow-crowned mountains or active volcanoes looked down upon Nature's daring colour-effects dashed off in her most fantastic moods; where the central fires of the globe sent up their steam in jets, and the angry gnome, "the mid-earth's swarthy child," still murmured audibly; where boiling fountains hissed and gurgled, unchilled by the wintry blast; where fairy terraces, lustrous in lace-like tracery, lay shining,

translucent, under summer moon or winter dawn; where the unsophisticated inhabitants of this weird and magical region, all ignorant of the clothes philosophy, revelled from morn to eve in the luxurious warmth of medicated baths, curative of all the ills that flesh is heir to.

When he communicated his intentions as to visiting the far-famed land of the geyser and the fumarole to his friends, they all advised him to make the journey without delay.

"It is one of the wonders of the world, and by no means the least," said Mr. Lochiel. "I thank God that I have seen it; and though I have travelled much in other lands, I have never beheld the place that equals that strange and grand landscape, terrible even in its beauty. The delicate loveliness of the pink and white terraces 'beggars all description.' I shall not attempt it. They alone are well worth coming from the other end of the world to see."

"And I wouldn't delay either," said Captain Macdonald. "This Waitara business may bring on war at any time, and then no white man, except a missionary, is safe—hardly he, indeed."

"I will start next week," said Massinger, "if I can get a horse and guide. I should never forgive myself if I lost the chance by delay."

"Horses of any kind you can pick up at the bazaar within an hour," said Mr. Lochiel; "and I will send you a guide who could find his way to Taupo in the dark. It is scarcely a road to travel alone just now, and the forest tracks are neither easy to keep nor to find again when lost. The rivers, too, are of a violent nature, and dangerous unless you know the fords."

Acting upon this information and the advice so freely tendered, Mr. Massinger at once bought himself a horse. The roads being rough—indeed, mostly in a state of nature, as he was informed—and a certain amount of wearing apparel and provisions being absolutely necessary, he looked less to the paces and appearance of the animal than to its strength and substance. A guide, too, was essential, as in a country where the primeval forest was almost impracticable in places, where the ice-cold rivers were without fords often, without bridges always, local knowledge was indispensable. He was fortunate in one respect, as he fell across a stout half-bred grey mare at a moderate price.

Something was said to him about the danger of travelling among the wilder tribes of the north without protection, or even a comrade of his own race ; to which he made answer that he had not come all that way to lead a feather-bed life. Whatever risk other men encountered, he felt equal to. So, with the good wishes of all whom he had met since his landing, he prepared to depart.

Mr. Slyde's parting injunction was, "Stand up to these Maori beggars, and talk as if you owned the island. They know a gentleman when they see one, and they hate anything like distrust or double-dealing. Unless war is declared while you are away, you will be as safe as in town here ; in some respects perhaps safer. *Au revoir.*"

In New Zealand at that time, and, indeed, long afterwards, people were so accustomed to the sight of the emigrant Briton, with his thick boots, his rough tweeds, Crimean shirt, and brand-new valise or saddle-

bags, that such an apparition hardly excited more surprise than in the Australian colonies. There, a hundred years of colonization have settled the race in personal habitudes descriptive of every shade of road travel, town dwelling, ordinary wayfaring or desert exploration. One glance there is sufficient to determine, not only the station in life, but the immediate business or occupation of the stranger. And so full and continuous had been the stream of emigration poured into New Zealand of late years, that the ultra-British rig excited no more remark than that of the tweed-clad tourist in the Highlands. Even the "garb of old Gaul," which the clansmen from Aberfoil or Glengarry not infrequently sported, as useful, dignified, and ornamental, only received a passing glance, or gave rise to a transient observation from a native as to the peculiar description of lunacy to which the pakehas were subject.

When, therefore, Roland Massinger left Auckland one fine morning, riding his gallant grey, with the trusty double-barrel on his shoulder, a navy revolver in his belt, and a miscellaneous assortment of useful articles dispersed about himself and his charger, no one seemed disposed to remark unnecessarily, or to make jeering remarks upon his outfit.

A day or two before starting, Massinger receive a note in a strange handwriting, which ran as follows:—

"Auckland, 14, Shortland Street,
"Wednesday.

"DEAR SIR,

"My old friend Dr. Lochiel has, I believe, recommended me to you as a guide for the trip to Rotorua and Rotomahana.

"I know the country well, and shall be glad to act, if we can arrange. I don't say that it is too safe in the present state of native feeling, but that is for you to judge. I shall have the pleasure of calling upon you to-morrow morning.

"Yours truly,

"ALBERT WARWICK.

"R. Massinger, Esq."

"Why, I thought Dr. Lochiel told me that the guide was a half-caste," said he to himself. "Very well written and expressed. Some men I know, from English public schools, too, could not have written such a note to save their lives. However, I suppose he got some one to write it for him."

He had finished his breakfast, and was digesting it and the contents of the *New Zealand Herald*, besides trying to reconcile conflicting statements as to the Native Lands Policy, when a visitor was announced.

"Mr. Massinger, I believe," said the stranger, bowing. "My name is Warwick; I presume you received my note yesterday?"

For one moment that gentleman's self-possession almost failed him, but he recovered himself in time to murmur an assent and ask the stranger to take a chair. There was some reason for his surprise.

He saw before him a very good-looking, well-dressed man of about his own age, turned out much as he had often been himself for a day's shooting. A Norfolk jacket, with knickerbockers and worsted stockings, these last exhibiting a volume of muscular calf, above laced-up shooting-boots of great strength and thickness of sole. A wide-brimmed felt hat, and

a Crimean shirt, completed attire which was eminently appropriate and serviceable.

"You know the people and the country, as well as the route to these far-famed lakes?" he inquired.

"From my boyhood," answered this perplexing personage, with a perfectly correct, even finished accent, "I have been familiar with both. We have relatives in the Ngapuhi tribe, and I am always glad of an excuse to see some wild life among them. I have occasionally acted as guide to parties of tourists, and not so long ago to His Excellency the Governor and his staff."

"And your remuneration?" queried the tourist, thinking it wise to settle that important question off-hand.

"Oh, say a guinea a day and expenses paid," replied the stranger, in airy, off-hand fashion, as if the trifling amount was hardly worth mentioning. "That is my usual fee. I am fond of these expeditions myself, and in pleasant company; but that one must live, I should be quite willing to go with you for nothing."

"That, of course, is not to be thought of. But it will be an added pleasure to have a companion from whom I can gain information and share a novel experience."

"Thanks very much," said Mr. Warwick, bowing; "and for the baggage, if I might advise, the least possible quantity that you can do with. All beyond will encumber you in the sort of trail before us. I should like to superintend the packing."

"Very grateful, if you will," said Massinger. "Perhaps you would not mind breakfasting with me to-morrow; we could start directly afterwards."

"Most happy. In that case, I shall be here at sunrise, which will give time to arrange the pack, and we need lose none of the best part of the day."

So much being understood, Mr. Warwick bowed himself out, leaving his employer in a state of suppressed astonishment.

"The land of wonders, indeed!" he soliloquized. "The people, as well as the land, seem mysteries and enigmas. Only to look at this man is a revelation. What a handsome fellow he is!—no darker than a Spaniard, with regular features and a splendid figure. He would throw into the shade many of the curled darlings of the old land. One of his descendants, having taken high honours at Christ Church University, is obviously the man Macaulay had in his mind when he created the immortal New Zealander on London Bridge. His accent, his manner, his whole bearing, quiet, dignified, easy. Why, he has quite English club form! And where can he have got it? At any rate, there will be some one to talk to on the way, and as he is a master of Maori as well as English, he will be invaluable as an interpreter."

Preliminaries are hateful things at best, but after the usual hindrances a start was made tolerably early in the day, and ere long our hero was inducted into the peculiarities of forest wayfaring, as at that time practised in New Zealand.

He had scorned the idea of performing any part of it by sea or coach, having heard that all the pioneers, aristocratic or otherwise, had been noted for their pedestrian prowess.

So, with Warwick leading the way with the packhorse, and he himself doughtily surmounting rock or

log, or thrusting between brambles and climbers, he realized that he was at length actively engaged in the adventurous experiences he had come so far to seek.

They did not always keep to the rude highways, or accepted tracks of ordinary travellers; Warwick seemed, without bestowing thought or care upon the matter, to journey upon a line of his own. It invariably turned out to be the correct one, as it cut off angles and shortened the distances, always striking points on the main trail which he had previously described. All the available stopping-places on the road were thoroughly well known to him, and between the more desirable inns and accommodation houses, at all of which Warwick was evidently the *bienvenu*, and the historical localities near which Massinger was prone to linger, no great progress was made. However, time being no object, they wandered along in a leisurely and satisfactory way, Massinger congratulating himself again and again on his good fortune in having secured such a guide and companion.

At Mercer, on their third day out, Mr. Massinger was gladdened with his first sight of the Waikato, that noble river around which so many legends have been woven, on whose banks so much blood has been shed, on whose broad bosom the whale-boat has succeeded the canoe, the steamer the whale-boat. His spirits rose to enthusiasm as they traversed the country between the river and the lakes of Waikare and Rangarui. While at Taupiri, he marked the groves—actual groves, as he exclaimed—of peach and cherry trees planted by the missionaries in past days. Then leaving the river, they entered on the great Waikato plain.

"All this is very pleasant," he said one morning; "though, but for the absence of red-tiled farmhouses and smock-wearing yokels, I might as well be back in Herefordshire. What I am dying to see, is a decent-sized village—*kainga*, don't you call it?—where I may see the noble Maori with his *mere-mere*, his *pah*, and his *whare-puni*, in all his pristine glory unsullied by pakeha companionship."

"I think I can manage that for you," replied Warwick, with an amused smile, "between here and Oxford."

"What, more England?" said Massinger. "Why not Clapham and Paddington at once?"

"Well, you must bear with Lichfield," continued Warwick. "We can turn off there and make for Taupo. Before we get there, I can promise you one real Maori settlement, as well as another rather more important, at Taupo on the lake."

"And a chief?" queried the wayfarer. "I must have chiefs. A real Rangatira."

"I believe Waka Nene, warrior, high chief, and ally of England, is on a visit at the first one we come to," said the guide, "and he should satisfy your taste for Maori life."

Their pathway was narrow, chiefly bordered by high ferns, various kinds of low-growing bushes, and when the forest was reached, occasionally blocked by fallen timber, which necessitated a considerable detour, not always accomplished without difficulty, and obstacles which seemed to multiply the fatigues of the journey. Still, the wondrous beauty of the primeval forest had fully repaid him for all difficulties which nature placed in their way. Hundreds

of feet overhead, almost hiding the rays of the autumnal sun, and causing Massinger to throw back his head to gaze at their lofty coronets of foliage, rose the royal ranks of the Kauri, the Totara, the Rimu, and the Kahi-kalea. Unlike the less o'ershadowed forests in Australia described in his premigratory course of reading, there was but little herbage to be seen between the giants of that unconquered woodland. Ferns, trailers, thorn bushes, often breast-high, more or less aggressive, climbers and parasites, filled up all space beneath the columnar trunks which stretched so far and wide.

It could easily be imagined how great an advantage the native warrior, but little encumbered with clothes, and active as the panther, had over the heavily armed, heavily clothed soldier of the regular forces. A fair, though not accurate shot at short range, practically almost invisible, the native is trained to take advantage of every description of covert. What chance, then, Massinger thought, would British regulars have against the guerilla tactics of this stubborn, fearless, yet crafty race?

As happened to many a gallant British soldier in the American revolutionary war, it might be a brave man's lot to be shot by a boy of fourteen, safely bestowed behind a fallen tree, or protected by a thicket whence he could empty his rifle at the fully exposed ranks of the pakeha. Though active, and fond of strong exercise of all kinds, Massinger was by no means sorry when his guide halted by the side of a gurgling stream, and intimated that they would here halt for refreshment. Rows of that magnificent fern, *Dicksonia*, fully thirty feet in height, towered

over the banks of the rushing streamlet; a level patch of verdure near the bank provided a tempting lounge, as well as a table on which to arrange their humble meal. There reclining, the wayfarer from a far land reflected approvingly on the first stages of a journey which already promised a world of novel and mysterious experiences. And now a new experience awaited him.

Rested and refreshed, they moved on till towards evening, when Warwick, after following the path which led to the brow of a steep hill, stopped and invited his companion to look around. Far in the distance loomed the curved shoulder of a snow-crowned mountain. The ocean again rose to view. A winding river threaded the fields and pastures of a broad meadow. Tiny columns of smoke ascended from a collection of reed-constructed cabins. And with a distinct relaxation of feature, the guide pronounced the word *Kainga*—"Here is our stage for the night."

It was, indeed, a native village, or more strictly speaking, a "township." For there were, besides a considerable population, distinctive and representative features which in ancient Britain would have entitled it to the appellation of a *castrum*—witness Doncaster, Colchester, Winchester, and the like.

Above the alluvial flat, on the scarped and terraced hill, rose the *pah*, or fortress proper—now in good working, that is, warlike order.

"Why, it's a castle!" exclaimed Massinger. "I had no idea that the natives did things in this style. I doubt whether the ancient Britons had one like this to check the Roman advance. Certainly they had

no rifle-pits. Fancy climbing up these precipices to find a double line of desperate warriors at the top!"

"All the same, it was taken once, after a fairly long siege; and a fine, bloodthirsty affair it was, by all accounts," said Warwick. "But the garrison had been weakened."

"In what way?"

"The water gave out; food was short also. That they could have borne, but they had nothing to drink for days before they gave in."

"This great fortress, for such it was" (wrote an eye-witness), "was constructed by this singular people with due attention to the canons of strategic fortification. It stood on a peak two thousand feet high, on the summit of a tortuous forest range, girt on each side by precipitous gorges and rugged intervening eminences.

"Triple lines of palisading guarded the front, while the crest of the ridge was narrowed in wedge-like form to the rear of the *pah*. The outer parapet, seven feet high, extended on each side to the edge of the range, but was formed with angles near its junction with the cliff, in order to cover completely an attacking party. The inner parapet, more than twelve feet high, was guarded by sandbag loopholes to enable the garrison to fire in safety. Covered ways, from parapet to parapet, and pit to pit, protected the garrison in their movements."

This was one of the sights which he had "come out into the wilderness for to see"—specially and in spite of its being a tolerably large and important *hapu*, or section of the great Ngatiawa tribe, with

whom relations were certainly strained. His adventurous soul was stirred within him, as he marked the position of the *whare-puni*, or council-hall, imposing in size and ornamentation, elaborate though rude; the clustering *whares* or wigwams, each containing the family unit complete; with men, women, and children, dogs and ponies, straying about in careless intermixture; the warriors of the tribe holding aloof in haughty independence, the "grave and reverend seigneurs" sitting in a circle, indulging in converse—doubtless as to matters of state. It became increasingly apparent to his mind that the affairs of such a race deserved all the consideration which the most experienced, just, and intelligent legislators could bestow.

As they approached, the stranger could observe that a certain degree of excitement had already commenced to make itself visible. The men who had been sitting arose, and those who were already standing, relinquished their attitudes of dignified ease for those of watchful attention, not unmingled with suspicion. The women left their work or play (for among the younger ones several games of skill or address were evidently in progress) and joined the expectant crowd.

Male and female, young and old, there could hardly have been less than three hundred people gathered together on the comparatively small plateau. From their point of view it had exceptional advantages, and had doubtless been selected with foresight and judgment. Overlooking the river, winding through a fertile meadow, which showed by its careful and intense cultivation how the principal food-supply of the tribe was furnished, it was protected by the almost

perpendicular river-bank, of great height, from sudden assault. An undulating stretch of open or timbered country filled in the foreground, while in the dim distance rose the giant form of Tongariro, cloud-capped, menacing, in dread majesty and sublimity, and but a few miles to the eastward, calm in the fading light, lay the placid waters of a lake. Strangely beautiful as was the whole landscape, wanting no element which in other lands excites wonder or arouses admiration, there was yet a feeling of undefined doubt, amounting to suspicion of evil, as his eye roved over the unfamiliar scene. This was confirmed, even deepened, as a geyser between them and the lake suddenly shot to a height of fifty or sixty feet in the air, while a hitherto unsuspected fumarole sent its smoke-columns towards the firmament. Yet not a head was turned, not a movement made by the group, "native and to the manner born." Geysers and fumaroles were part of their daily life, it would appear.

"There may be differences of opinion as to the advantages of their proximity," thought the white stranger, as he scanned the grand and majestic features of the wide landscape before him, "but none can deny their sublimity." He could scarce refrain from exclaiming aloud—

> "Lives there the man with soul so dead,
> Who never to himself hath said," etc.

If he had carried out the unspoken thought he would have raised himself in the estimation of his newly found acquaintances, as no nation has had a higher appreciation of elocutionary effort; and a free translation by his guide would have doubtless confirmed

the *entente cordiale*. As it was, however, the few sentences uttered by his companion, in which, among others, he recognized the words Pakeha, Rangatira, and Mata Kawana, were sufficiently satisfactory. This was, of course, after the formal greeting of "*Haere mai!*" had been pronounced by the elders and principal personages of the assembly, as well as by all the women, and the rank and file.

A venerable and imposing-looking personage, apparently of great age, approached to greet the strangers, and, after exchanging a few sentences of an interrogatory nature, pointed the way to an unoccupied *whare* of larger dimensions than the others. In this, Mr. Massinger was told, through the interpreter, to place his possessions, and to consider himself at home for the present. An adjoining tenement was indicated, in a less formal way, as provided for his companion, the difference of their positions being accurately understood. Indeed, the socialists of the day would be rather scandalized at the gulf which separates the Maori aristocrat, or *rangatira*, from the "common people" (if one may use such an expression) of the tribe.

The *rangatira* was, indeed, a personage of no ordinary distinction. Served from his childhood by his "inferiors," in the most true and literal sense of the word; waited upon with deference, mingled with apprehension, by the women, the slaves and the rank and file of the tribal section, or *hapu*, to which he was born, no wonder that he grew up with the traditional qualities imputed to the mediæval aristocrat.

He was the robber-baron of the Rhine; he was the untrammelled seigneur of the time of Louis

Quatorze; he was the piratical Viking of the Norse legends.

He raided his weaker neighbours; he descended upon defenceless coast settlements; he organized carefully thought-out plans of invasion, alliance, or reprisal. He was comprehensively merciless in war, slaying and enslaving at will. But he possessed, by the strongest contemporary evidence, the corresponding virtues. He was brave to recklessness, chivalrous to a degree unknown in modern warfare, sending notice of attack, in ordinary cases, before the commencement of hostilities; and, in well-authenticated instances, even forwarding ammunition to the enemy who had run short of powder, invariably choosing death before dishonour. And he was religious after his own fashion, recognizing superior as well as inferior deities and supernatural personages, whom it was important to honour and conciliate. He was at all times ready to die for his principles, or in vindication of his dignity and hereditary position.

Roland Massinger, when he found himself in full possession of the *whare*, which had been floored with clean fern, and even adorned with several bunches of the beautiful crimson rata and pohutukana blossoms, began to revolve the strange chain of circumstances which had led to his finding himself the honoured guest of this sub-section of a more or less ferocious tribe. Nothing imaginable could be more romantic; at the same time, the situation was, at the best, only comparatively satisfactory. The smouldering blood-feud between the races, already dangerously fanned by the mistaken action already referred to, might blaze up at any moment. Then, the war-spirit once

aroused, and the boding scream of the *Hokioi* thrilling all hearts, the position of an isolated European would be doubtful, if not desperate.

Of the risks and chances thus involved, however, our adventurer made but little account. He had not come so far to abstain from exploration of this wonderful country. It was not worse than Africa, whence many an Englishman had returned rich and distinguished. Whatever happened, he was embarked in the enterprise; would go through with it at all hazards.

With the addition of a small contribution from his store of provisions to the *kumera*, pork and potatoes, together with a great dish of *peppis*, or cockles, supplied in clean flat baskets, he made a satisfactory meal, concluding, of course, with a pannikin of tea. He had arranged his rug and blankets at one side of his rude chamber, and, being reasonably tired with the day's journey, looked forward to a night's rest of a superior description.

He walked a few steps from the door, and, lighting his pipe, gazed upon the scene before him. The moon, nearly full, lighted up the river, the meadow, the distant mountain, the dark-hued forest. No civilized habitation was visible. No sound broke the stillness of the night, save the murmuring voices of the dwellers in this strange settlement of primitive humanity. Habitudes common to all societies, rude or civilized, were not wanting. Women talked and laughed, children prattled or lamented, as the case might be. There was the narrator of events, the wandering minstrel, the troubadour or "jongleur" of this later Arcadia, with his circle of interested listeners. The boys and

girls played at games, or walked in friendly converse, much as those of their age do in all countries. The men were grave or gay, earnest or indifferent, as elsewhere. Occasionally he caught the word *pakeha* strongly accented, from which he gathered that his appearance and movements had aroused curiosity, perhaps suspicion.

After a while he observed a small party or group of mixed sexes, which, breaking up, moved in the direction of his abode. As they came closer, he observed the guide walking among them. Coming to the front, as he advanced to meet them, he inquired of him what it meant.

"They want you to go to-morrow and see the famous lakes and terraces. I told them you were in a hurry, and must go back to the Governor at Auckland." Upon this, the leaders of the party, among whom were several young girls, raised a cry of dissent, making angry gestures and sportively threatening the guide, while they pointed towards the east, intimating that the proposed expedition was *kapai* ("very good").

By the time the explanation had reached that stage, Roland found himself encircled by these dusky maidens, who, with flashing eyes, animated gestures, and caressing tones, sought to make the *pakeha rangatira* understand that the arrangement would be much to his advantage.

The guide spoke to them in the native tongue, extolling the importance and wealth of his patron, and rather deprecating the expedition, as inconsistent with the responsible duties which were his peculiar province. However, such was the persistency with which they urged their argument, that, after asking

for a literal translation of the several inducements held out, Roland pretended to waver.

"How long will it take," he inquired of his guide, "to go and return?"

"Not more than two or three weeks," he returned answer.

"And are the natives much the same as these?"

"No great difference, except that they are more expert in getting money out of travellers."

"Will any of these young people go with us?"

"Oh yes, if you ask them, and give them a small keepsake, or something in the way of pay, for their services."

"Then, I think I will——"

How the pakeha was about to end this speech may never be accurately known, for at that moment a loud cry of "Erena, Erena!" arose from the rear, and a girl, differing in several important respects from the young women around him, moved quietly through the crowd and stood among the foremost speakers.

Roland at once recognized in the new-comer a personality altogether different from any which he had previously encountered in New Zealand. It was not alone that she was fairer than her dusky sisters; such complexions had he seen before, due to the intermixture of the races, by no means uncommon in the coast towns. Many of the young people of that blood were distinctly handsome in face and striking in figure. But there was something regal and statuesque in the bearing of this damsel which he had scarcely realized as of possibility in a Maori tribe.

Her dress consisted of a more ornate and elaborate upper garment than the ordinary flax mat, or *puriri*,

worn by the other women of the tribe. Later on, Massinger learned to know it as a *kaitaka*, or shawl, made of the finest flax, laboriously prepared, till it almost resembled silk in texture and appearance; a portion of it was dyed black, and worked in small diamond-shaped patterns, surmounted by long white fringes.

It might almost have been woven in a loom, such was the precision with which the fine twisted flax threads crossed each other at intervals. The making of such a garment, chiefly worn by women of rank or distinction, required both skill and patience; a whole winter was not considered an unreasonable time to devote to its manufacture. Gracefully draped over one rounded shoulder, it fell in folds over a striped woollen undergarment reaching below the knees, permitting the free, graceful, and unstudied movements so characteristic of the untrammelled races of the earth.

As this girl walked slowly forward, the Englishman thought she might have stood for a sculptor's model of a woodland nymph, as yet unconscious of the admiring glances of Phœbus Apollo.

"Who is this young woman?" said Roland to the guide. "What is her name, and how does she come to be with the natives?"

"Her name is Erena Mannering," said he. "She belongs to the tribe, though she is a half-caste. Her father was a sea-captain, and her mother a chief's daughter. I have told her about you, and she wishes to speak."

"But I cannot talk Maori. You will have to interpret what she says and what I say."

The guide smiled. "She can speak English as well as we can. She was educated at a college in Wanganui, endowed for the teaching of Maoris and half-castes."

Thus emboldened, Roland advanced, and begged to be favoured with her advice as to his making the journey to Rotomahana.

"I hear," he said, "that there are difficulties in the way. My good friend Warwick thinks that if the country is not in a disturbed state now, it soon may be, in which case there might be risks. They tell me, however, that it is a charming place, and well worth a trial."

"It is the most beautiful place I ever saw or dreamed of," answered the strange maiden, in a low rich voice, and with perfect intonation. "For the danger, I cannot speak. There may be, if war breaks out; but Maoris do not kill white strangers unless they have a motive. Do you care very much to go?"

The expedition was now, in Roland's chivalrous mind, rapidly assuming the form of an adventure. War, danger, and a *belle sauvage!* He thought of "The Burial of Atala" which he had seen in the gallery of the Louvre, and answered with decision—

"Always with your permission, I have made up my mind to see Rotomahana or die."

The girl smiled, as she looked fixedly at the white stranger with half-compassionate eyes.

"You are like all your countrymen. Only say there is a chance of being killed, and you cannot stop them. I will speak to the chief. He may write you a pass, and then none can harm you."

Whereupon she glided forward, and, threading

the group, stood before the chief, with whom she conversed earnestly for some minutes, after which she reappeared.

"The chief says that you must go at your own peril. There might be danger if war is declared. But he does not think you will be interfered with. He will send people with you."

"Wonders will never cease," thought Roland. "Fancy this majestic chief writing a note, 'Please don't eat the bearer till I come,' or something to that effect!" But he only said that he was astonished at his kindness, and would gratefully accept his written passport.

"I dare say you are surprised at a Maori chief writing at all; but Waka Nene is a baptized Christian. He was converted by one of the early missionaries, and taught to read and write. He has been a firm friend of the English ever since. He fought for them in Honii Heke's war, and will fight for them in this one, if your people are foolish enough to bring it on."

"My eyes are being opened; by-and-by I shall be enlightened as to Maori matters. At present I know little. But my friends in England will never believe me if I tell them of a Maori chief writing notes, and a Maori young lady talking excellent English."

"I am not a young lady—I am only a half-caste Maori girl; but I can help your people now and then. Is there anything else that I can do for you?"

"There is one thing more which would add so much to my pleasure in this journey," said Roland, emboldened by the strange, unreal aspect of all things —the flowing river, murmuring in the stillness of the

night; the savage people in groups, lying or standing around; the dramatic scene with this half-wild maiden, with flashing eyes and mobile face, a figure like the huntress Diana, and a rich low-toned voice that was like the murmur of a love-song. "There is one thing which would make the journey perfect."

"What is that?" asked the damsel, looking him full in the face with the clear unabashed eyes of youth and innocence.

"That you would accompany us."

He felt, as he uttered the words, that he had presumed too far on such a slight acquaintance, and that she might resent the proposal.

Much to his relief, however, she smiled like a pleased child, and looking at him with much earnestness, said—

"Would you really like me to go?"

"Like you to go! Why, I should be charmed. Think of the advantage to me of a companion familiar with all the points of the landscape, as well as every legend and historic locality. But it is too great a favour to ask."

The girl's eyes glowed, as with animated countenance Roland proceeded to detail the amazing benefits of this arrangement. But, true to her sex, she appeared to hesitate, and finally said she must consult the chief; if he offered no objection, they would start early on the following morning.

Nothing could be more promising or more in accordance with Roland's feelings. His guide, who had contented himself with putting in a word or two now and then, had a short conversation in Maori with the new-found goddess. Then bidding him good-night,

she passed on with swift steps towards the group of elders, where the chief still stood. There she apparently entered upon the affair of the expedition, for question and answer were quickly interchanged, and the earnest tones of the speakers—several of the surrounding elders having joined in—showed that the question was being fully debated. Lastly, at a few sentences uttered by the youngest man of the party, she laughingly shook her hand threateningly at him, and ran lightly back to the part of the *kainga* from which she had first emerged.

"It is all right," said Warwick; "the chief has consented. Erena will go with us to-morrow. She is better than any man on a journey, and knows every step of the way. We had better make an early start."

This Mr. Massinger had every inclination to do; so, after smoking a couple of pipes in front of their temporary castle, producing tobacco, and distributing largesse of the same in free fashion, which conduced to his instant popularity, he lay down in his *whare* enveloped in rugs and coverings, where the rippling river lulled him into sleep so sound that the chatter of the village gossips, and even the baying of the dogs, which occasionally broke into chorus, had no power to disturb it.

CHAPTER VI

THE dawn light awoke Massinger, who, since his arrival in New Zealand, had cultivated the virtuous habit of early rising, considering it to be one of the necessary attributes of a hardy colonist. Like others who have been educated by circumstances to the practice, he found so many advantages accruing from it, that he resolved to continue it. Hence, though a sufficient sleeper in the early watches of the night, he began to be automatically awakened at daybreak.

A glance around revealed the unfamiliar circumstances of his environment. Of the various groups which had constituted the village community on the previous night, by far the greater number were silent, or slumbering in the *whares*. An occasional figure raising itself from the recumbent position showed that he was not the only wakeful one in the *kainga*. Half-forgotten tales of Indian warfare, recurred to his memory, where the hero, desiring to escape from captivity, looks upon much the same scene as that which lay before him. He could not but feel that he and Warwick were entirely at the mercy of the warriors who composed the greater part of the *hapu* there assembled. The turn of a straw, in the electrical

condition of the political atmosphere, might lead to bloodshed, involving a declaration of war. The first reverse would doubtless throw the Maori people into such a state of wrath and exasperation, that, even against the policy of their chiefs, irresponsible members of the tribe might be tempted to sacrifice isolated parties of the invading race.

The prospect of a journey by unknown paths through a trackless wilderness, with however fair a goal, did not look so alluring as when associated over-night with the witchery of Erena Mannering's eyes and wonderfully expressive countenance, which hardly needed the translation of her thoughts into words.

However, the die was cast. He had given his sanction to the affair; and Roland Massinger was not the man under such circumstances to go back an inch from his word. Before dressing for the day, he took advantage of the proximity of the river for a bath, a preliminary step which, when circumstances permitted, he never omitted. While descending the slope which led to the river bank, he was joined by Warwick, who came leaping along the steep descent like a mountain deer. Arrayed in a pyjama suit only, which indicated the symmetry of his magnificent figure, his employer could not avoid admiration at his grand and striking presence. Taller by several inches than himself, his muscular development was exceptionally fine, while his activity, as evidenced by the constancy of his pace, and the ease with which he mounted and descended the most precipitous hills, clearing the smaller running streams with hardly an apparent effort, was truly abnormal.

A sure and deadly shot, he made excellent practice

with the navy revolver which he carried in his belt. So that, in addition to his general knowledge of the people and the country, Massinger rightly judged that he might have searched far before finding so perfect a pathfinder ; at the same time, a comrade of courage and resource, on whom he might rely in the hour of need.

By the time they had fully refreshed themselves in the rushing tide of the Huka, they discovered that a considerable body of spectators had gathered on the higher terrace which commanded the spot which they had chosen for their ablutions. As they passed through the crowd now collected between them and their *whares*, from time to time such words were heard as, "*Kapai te Pakeha, kapai!*" "*Kapai te Rangatira!*" but all was in the nature of compliment to the travellers, and more particularly the pakeha, or white stranger. Warwick they appeared to regard as akin to them, and therefore not possessing the charm of mystery. Food was then brought, more than sufficient in quantity, and by no means to be despised by men whose appetite had been sharpened by a toilsome day's journey and the eager air of this antarctic wilderness.

The traveller had bread, and even butter, in his packs. With these aids, and, of course, quart-pot tea, the repast, if wanting in delicacy, was yet ample and satisfactory. After its completion, and the lighting of the after-breakfast pipe, he felt fully equal to the inauguration of the expedition, and awaited somewhat impatiently the appearance of the tutelar divinity.

"How about the maiden fair? Do you think she has changed her mind, Warwick?"

"Another woman might, but not Erena," said the guide, with an air of conviction. "Before long she will come round the corner of that hill. I dare say she'll have some of her people with her. She's an aristocrat in her way."

"I should think she was," said the other, with an air of entire conviction. "She should be a most interesting study. Are there many more of the intellectual daughter of the soil sort, in these woods and forests? She is like Rosalind in the forest of Arden, but there does not appear to be an Orlando so far. I shall be anxious to see the other damsels."

"There will be two, if not three, with her to-day. One of her male cousins is a fellow whose company I'd rather not have now, or at any time; said to be an admirer of hers, which makes him more objectionable still. Here they come, however, with Erena marching ahead like a queen! Three girls, and a young fellow who's been educated at sea, with this sulky brute Ngarara—confound *him* very particularly! —bringing up the rear."

As Warwick had foretold, the little party came round the corner of the mount and made straight for the centre of the village. By this time the grey mare had been brought up and saddled. Upon her the various packs were placed, to the great interest and excitement of the youth of the community, who gathered round and commented freely upon the *personnel* and otherwise of the expedition. Discovering by experience that, with some additions, the mare was sufficiently weighted, and that riding in such a country was more trouble than it was worth, her owner elected to travel on foot, like the rest of the

party. This would leave him more at liberty to examine the botanical and geological features of the strange region upon which they were entering. The position, too, would be more dignified than riding at a foot pace, pushing his way through entangling thickets. Besides all this, he would, in right of his position as head and paymaster of the expedition, be entitled to take his place alongside of the most interesting personage. Thus, in the daily march, he would enjoy the original converse of an unspoiled daughter of Eve, fresh from Nature's bosom, unhackneyed by the artifices and conventional deceits of the children of the world.

He walked forward and greeted the forest maiden, who smiled frankly and held out her hand, which he took with becoming *empressement*. In one comprehensive glance at her, before he relinquished it, he noted the details of her dress and equipment. Her figure, statuesque in every curve and line as the Venus of Milo, was scarcely concealed by the robe which, thrown across the chest and upper arm, revealed in part the outline of her classic bust, while affording full play to every motion of the arms and hands. A species of kirtle, coming below the knee, left her lower limbs free and unconfined. Her feet were bare, the smallness of which, as well as the delicate moulding of the limbs, betrayed her British ancestry.

Perfectly attired for travel through the steep ascents, the treacherous morasses and dense woodland of her native land, as with sparkling eyes and gladsome expression she walked forth at the head of the little party, Massinger thought he had never

before seen a more perfect presentment of the nymph of the legends of Hellas.

"We must say good-bye to the chief," she said; "it is *tika*—due and proper respect. Besides, if we leave without the paper he promised me we may have trouble."

They accordingly marched up to the chief's abode, upon which the venerable warrior walked forward to meet them. He spoke a few words to Warwick, who replied in his own tongue.

"Is the pakeha's heart strong to journey to the hot lakes and the burning earth, and does he not fear the warriors of Te Heu Heu who will be in his path?"

"The pakeha is a *toa*," replied the guide. "He fears no man. With his *tuparra* he can shoot men as far as he can see them, and he has a pocket-gun, which carries six men's lives, in his belt. So have I."

"No doubt the pakeha will fight," said the chief, "but bullets come from the bush sometimes. The hearts of my people are not sore, and I pray that peace may be kept. Here is the paper which I promised to the white rangatira. It will show Te Heu Heu and his people that he is not a man to be treated like a runaway sailor; and if they have doubts, Erena must speak to them. Her voice is like the flute of Tutekane, and they cannot but listen."

So the expedition departed on its way, Roland and Erena walking ahead. One of the younger Maoris, at a word from Warwick, took the bridle of the grey, and followed in the rear; while the others of the party, including the surly Ngarara, who regarded

Roland with a fixed and sinister gaze, took up the trail and plunged into the forest.

Their path led for some miles along the course of a narrow but swift and deep rivulet, until at length it became necessary to cross it at a gravelly ford. Then he saw the advantage which Erena possessed in being without shoes and stockings. She calmly waded in without damage to her attire, and tripped up the opposite bank. While Massinger was speculating as to whether he should unlace his boots, and so save the necessity of going in wet ones for the remainder of the day, Warwick made a sign to one of the men, who without further ado "made a back," as in schoolboy days, taking him up thereon and across the stream, as if he had been one in good earnest. This feat accomplished, the party proceeded as before, through the primeval forest. It began now to be apparent that the difficulties of the way were likely to increase rather than to diminish.

The flax swamps appeared to become deeper and more treacherous, the hills to be higher, the path less easy to distinguish, the thickets more dense, and the thorn bushes more clinging and obstructive. Through all these obstacles and hindrances the Maori maiden seemed to glide like a disembodied spirit, keeping up a pace the while which taxed Massinger's powers more shrewdly than he would have believed possible. He was a good pedestrian, proud of his speed and stamina, but he had to confess to himself that this damsel and her attendants made the pace considerably better than he would have believed possible through such a country. Uphill or down

made no difference, apparently, to them. Warwick marched in the rear, and kept an eye on the man who was leading the packhorse, any accident to which, in flood or marsh, would have made a serious difference in the comfort of the party.

Massinger was not, therefore, displeased when, after scaling a higher hill than they had as yet encountered, Erena pointed to a wide expanse of champaign—more extensive, indeed, than he was beginning to think he was likely to see again—and said—

"Here we stop for an hour. I dare say you will like a rest."

He did not care to acknowledge that he had been nearly outpaced by this young woman and her wild-wood friends, but looking at her before he answered, he noticed a mirthful twinkle in her dark eyes, which convinced him that she comprehended fully the humour of the situation.

"I am afraid you have been trying whether this pakeha can walk," he said, as she smiled archly. "Your country is not easy, and I am scarcely in training. But in a few days I will match myself against any of your people to run, jump, or walk for a wager."

"You must not do that with these natives," said she, gravely. "You would lose your *mana*, as we say, if you, a *rangatira* of the pakehas, engaged in contests of sport with the common people. However, some day you may have a chance of trying your speed against them. Warwick will tell you the same thing."

"Between your instructions and his, I shall soon know everything that is necessary for my good."

"Oh! he is very clever, and a *toa* as well—that is, a known athlete or warrior. There has been no

fighting since Heki's war in 1845, or he would have distinguished himself in that way, I feel sure."

"And now, tell me, do *you* think there is any danger of war breaking out, as some people think?"

"There *will* be war," replied the girl, fixing her eyes upon him with a sad and boding expression, "if the Governor takes the Waitara block by force. The chief thinks so too. He has remonstrated against it, though he will fight for your Queen to the death, and lead his tribe, the great tribe of the Ngapuhi, against her enemies."

"It is a pity it cannot be avoided; but, after all, there are worse things than war."

"If there are, I do not know them," said this Egeria of the South. "I have not seen a Maori war, but if you had heard the things I have heard you would never speak lightly of one of the most awful things in the world."

"Then I hope there will *not* be war," said Massinger, with a smile. "Personally, I suppose the sooner I get over to Rotorua and back to Auckland the better it will be. But whatever happens, I shall always thank the fates that sent me on this particular journey."

"Then you are pleased, even now," she said. "Oh, I am so glad!" and coming nearer to him, she took both his hands in hers, and, with a gesture of childish simplicity, pressed them warmly, gazing into his face with a look of frank delight, as might a sister thanking a brother for a birthday gift.

He had never met this type of womanhood before, and might have well been pardoned if he had misunderstood the feelings which appeared to actuate this woodland sylph. But possessing, as he did, a

sympathetic insight into the higher nature of women, he judged correctly that she was merely pleased with his approval of her presence and companionship.

As she withdrew her hands in a natural and instinctive fashion, while the blush which mantled under her clear brown skin showed that she felt herself to have overpassed the conventional line of courtesy, he half turned towards their attendants, who in Indian file were following up their footsteps. The Maori Ngarara was foremost on the trail, and must have noticed their attitude. For one brief moment his countenance wore the impress of all the darker passions, then relapsed into its usual expression of sullen dissatisfaction.

"We must descend now," said she, after their meal was ended. "I will promise not to go so fast for a while; you will find the evening walk quite a saunter after this morning."

"And why, may I ask, did you make the pace so good then?"

"I had a reason, a good one," she replied; "I did not hear about it till we were half way, or I should most certainly never have come this route at all. Did you observe a Maori woman come up for a few minutes, speak to Warwick, and go away?"

"Yes. I thought she might have some connection with the bearers. I hardly knew whether she stayed with them or disappeared. Did she bring a message?"

"Yes, and a most important one, too. That's why I pushed on at such a rate. If we had been nearer home, I should have returned; but the retreat would have been more dangerous than an advance."

"How can that be?"

"That woman ran twenty miles to warn me that Taratoa was out with a *taua*—a war expedition. She said the natives believed that the war was all but declared. Now, as Warwick will tell you, this Taratoa is one of the most turbulent and bloodthirsty chiefs of his ruthless tribe; and that is saying a good deal. He might—I don't say that he would, but it is quite possible—think it a fine chance of increasing his *mana* by killing the first pakeha, which would mean the *mataika* in the war—a most coveted distinction."

"What a ruffian! But 'dans la guerre c'est la guerre.' Pardon me for quoting the French proverb."

"Mais, monsieur, je le comprend parfaitement," she returned for answer, with a mock obeisance. "You must remember that there are here French as well as English colonists. And besides, I spent a year at Akaroa long ago, which, as all the world knows—the New Zealand world, I mean—was at one time a French settlement."

Massinger bowed with all the grace he could muster, and apologized for thinking it impossible that a New Zealand girl was conversant with French. "You remind me," he said, "of the Admiral in 'Singleton Fontenoy,' a naval novel of a later day than good old Captain Marryat. He asks one of the middies, when before Acre, if he spoke Turkish.

"'No, sir. Oh no! what made you think so?'

"'Well, you youngsters seem to have learned everything nowadays. I thought you might know that among other languages.'"

She laughed at this with the unreserved merriment which characterized her when not serious or mournful,

which, indeed, was the ordinary expression of her features when in repose.

"You had better ask Warwick if *he* understands Turkish. He knows most things. We must consult with him as to what is best to be done, when we camp. But I think we had better push on to the Lakes, where we shall be in the territory of Te Heu Heu. He will protect us."

So they fared on. Through flax swamps, where the sodden soil was often midleg deep; anon through rushing ice-cold streams, where there was difficulty in keeping footing, even when in no great depth of water; up the rugged sides of mountains, where the narrow path lay between the century-old pines, knee-high in bracken, and was occasionally obstructed by the fallen mass of some patriarch of the forest, which forbade direct progress.

Meanwhile, this wood-nymph and her attendants, the latter of whom carried burdens of no mean weight, tripped onward swiftly, as if the ordinary difficulties of such a journey were hardly worthy of notice. Erena sped along like a votary of the huntress Diana. Few obstacles made any noticeable difference to her pace, as she glided, at the head of the party, with serene self-confidence—a marvel of grace, swiftness, and endurance. Scarcely less was he stricken with admiration at the courage and activity of the humbler members of the party, particularly the women. They carried their burdens over the difficulties of the road with unflinching perseverance, following in Indian file the footsteps of Warwick, who occasionally made a detour, when he thought it advantageous.

"What astonishing infantry a race like this would

furnish!" thought Massinger. "Amid these forests, reasonably drilled and armed, in a guerilla war they could stand against the best troops in the world! Sheltered by these ancient woods, the breast-high bracken, these thickets impervious to all men but themselves, what chance would disciplined troops have against them? I hope to Heaven that we may never have to war with them *à l'outrance*. A succession of skirmishes would not matter so much, but a prolonged war would be one of the most expensive, and in some respects disastrous, on record."

He was recalled from these reflections by the voice of the guide, who had fallen back, and stood at some short distance, awaiting an opportunity to speak.

"I have halted the party," he said, "for we have no great distance to go, and may travel in a leisurely manner. We shall soon have our first sight of Taupo and commence to open out the hot lake country, with all the wonders of which you have heard."

"I am not sorry," said Massinger; "for though nothing could be more to my taste than our present form of journeying, yet I must confess to feeling impatient to behold these marvels that are in every one's mouth. I hope I shall not be disappointed."

"If so, you will be the first to confess it," said Warwick. "I have seen them many times, but they always fill me with fresh wonder and admiration. Nothing, in some respects, is equal to them in the world, I believe. 'See Rotomahana and die,' may well be said."

"When I do see it, it will be well described.

Between Erena and yourself, I shall lose no part of legend or tradition."

"She is far better at the legendary business than I am," said Warwick. "She has such a wonderful memory, and knows all the old tales and *waiatas* by heart. I tell her she should write a *booka-booka* about the place and the people. One is just as strange as the other."

"I think I must," said the subject of their conversation, who had now approached, after concluding a colloquy with the women of the expedition. "It seems hard that so many of these legends should be lost. When I was a child, they used to be sung and repeated at every camp fire. Now they are on the way to be forgotten. My father was always promising to make a collection of them, but they strayed into 'By-and-by Street, which leads to the House of Never.'"

Massinger smiled. "I know that street myself, I must confess; but while I live in your country it shall be *tapu*. The land of *Maui* is the place, and this year of grace the appointed time, for my work and adventure."

"And if there should be war?" said she, regarding him with a searching look, not wholly, as he thought, without a shade of doubt.

"All the more reason," he replied. "There is such a scarcity of honest fighting nowadays, that it will be a treat to face the real thing in one's own person."

For one instant an answering smile lit up her face as she gazed at Massinger, who unconsciously drew himself up and raised his head, as though fronting an advancing column. She sighed, as she came

forward, and lightly touching his shoulder, looked wistfully into his face. "You love war; it is in your blood. So do my people; it is the breath of their nostrils. My father, too, is a war-chief of the Ngapuhi, and fought with them in the old wars. But if you had ever seen Maoris in or after a battle, you would think you were in a land of demons, not men."

"A man can only die once. Your tribe, too, is on our side, is it not? I can't think the hostile natives will stand long before regular troops."

"Look at that bush," she said, pointing to a dense thicket of *Koreao*, where all sorts of horizontal climbers and clingers seemed struggling for the mastery, and into which the van of the little *cortége* had cast themselves, and gliding through, apparently without effort, had in part disappeared. "How do you think that a company of a regiment would advance or retreat, with Ngarara" (that amiable savage had just passed from view) "and a few hundreds of his tribe firing at you from behind it?"

"To tell truth, I think Ngarara would rather like it now, if he could get the chance; but I am a fair snapshot, and would try for first pull. However, we won't anticipate disagreeables. How far is Rotomahana? I am dying to see the terraces."

"You pakehas are always gay," she said. "Perhaps it is better to enjoy while we may. I wish I could do so. But our *Tohunga* has been prophesying, and his words have cast a shadow over my mind, which I vainly try to resist."

"But surely your education has taught you to despise superstitious fears?"

"My reason does so; but the senses revolt, strange as it may seem. I cannot get away from a dread of impending evil. My father, who has Highland blood in his veins, calls it the 'second sight.'"

"I have heard of it; and what did the seer foretell? Is he known to be a true prophet?" queried her companion.

"Wonderful as it may appear, he has been seldom wrong. This time he predicts war — bloody and doubtful. Our tribe, though sometimes defeated, is to be victorious. He counsels them to keep a straight path."

The next day's journey was over a different route. The forest, with its over-arching tree-tops and deep cool glades, lay behind them. They had entered upon a region of barren and desolate sand wastes, of which the neutral-tinted surface was varied by scarped over-hanging bluffs. In these, a red-ochreous conglomerate gave a weird and fantastic appearance to the landscape.

Halting towards evening, where the winding road by which they had been ascending appeared to decline towards a wide valley, Erena silently directed Massinger's attention to the far-stretching and varied view, adding, "You are about to descend into the land of wonders, and the kingdom of mysterious sights and sounds, with heaven above. As to below, what shall I say?"

He smiled as he answered, "It is only to look around, to convince one's self that we are on the border of a dread and unreal region. Look at that volcanic cone, splashed with shades of red, emitting steam from every point of its scarred sides and summit.

And those snow-capped mountains, grand and awful in their loneliness, gazing, as one would dream over a ruined world, themselves awaiting only the final conflagration."

"Very awful, terrible—infernal even, it seems to me sometimes," said Erena. "I cannot help wondering how long it will be before these imprisoned fires burst through, and, in rending their way to upper air, destroy the heedless people who live so cheerfully on a mere crust. But we must get down into this valley of Waiotapu, where we camp for the night. There will be such a sight-seeing to-morrow in store for us, that we shall hardly be able to move in the evening. Blue lakes and green lakes will be the least of the marvels. When I was a child, I used to think there would be talking fish in them, like those of the 'Arabian Nights,' which stood on their tails in the frying-pan."

"What a dear old book that is!" exclaimed he; "how I used to delight in it as a boy! Now I think of it, this region has a good deal of the Sindbad the Sailor business about it. I shouldn't wonder if we came to a loadstone mountain, which would draw all our steel and iron articles into it, like the nails in Sindbad's ship! It would be lovely to see everything take flight through the air, from the axes and revolvers to the old mare's shoes."

The girl smiled at this extravagance, but relapsed into her expression of habitual seriousness as she answered, "Who knows but that we may want the revolvers? At any moment war may break out. We are like the Rotorua natives, I am afraid, walking on thin crust."

"I have skated on thin ice before now," he said,

"but water and fire are different things. It seems uncanny to be on land where your walking-stick smokes if you poke it more than an inch into the soil. So this is the famous and sacred valley!"

"Here we are," said Warwick, who now joined them, "and I am not sorry. This sandy road takes it out of one ever so much more than the forest country. Our autumn sun, too, is fairly hot at mid-day. The *Wahines* felt it, carrying their loads up some of the hills."

"They seem to me to be given the heaviest packs," said Massinger, rather indignantly. "Why doesn't that hulking fellow Ngarara carry part of one at any rate?"

"Well, you see, he is a chief and has 'no back' —that is to say, he is absolved from bearing burdens. His person is sacred to that extent. I don't like him personally, but he is within his rights."

"I should like to kick him," said the Englishman; "he wants some of the nonsense taken out of him."

"I shouldn't advise any hasty act," said Warwick, looking grave. "He is a person of some consequence, and you would bring the whole tribe down upon us, as they would consider themselves insulted in his person; particularly now, as no one knows what may happen within a week or two. As for the women, poor things, they are used to it. They do much of the work of the tribe, and don't object to fighting on occasion."

"It is too true," said Erena. "I am always ashamed to see the tremendous loads they carry in the *kumera* season; and in the planting, digging, and weeding of those plantations that look so neat near

the *kaingas*, they do far more than their share. I suppose women in Europe don't work in the fields?"

"Well," returned Massinger, rather taken aback, "I am afraid I must own that *they do*, now I come to think of it. They hoe turnip and potato fields, reap and bind in harvest time; and, yes, the fishermen's wives and the colliers' daughters work—pretty hard, too. In France and Germany I have often thought they worked harder than the men."

"Ah! I see," said Erena, with a flash of her large dark eyes, illumined with a sudden fire, which completely altered the expression of her countenance. "Men are alike in all countries. They take the easy work, under pretence of responsibility, and leave the drudgery to the poor women. In one respect, however, we have the advantage. We can speak and vote in the councils of the tribe."

"You don't say so! I should like to hear you speak in public, above all things. Have you ever done so?"

"Sometimes," said she, relapsing into seriousness; "and if certain events come to pass, you may hear me make more than one speech in the *runanga* before the year is out."

"How interesting!" he said, gazing at her with admiration, as she stood in classic pose, with fixed gaze, and every graceful outline denoting arrested motion.

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"I thought it better to strike across to this valley of Waiotapu first," said Warwick, "though Erena was in favour of going straight to Rotorua. However, she now agrees with me, that you can have a foretaste of

volcanic action here, and take the main Taupo road to the terraces, returning by Rotorua, which is the home of the *hapu*, or section of her tribe."

"It is, after all, the best route, perhaps," said she, smiling frankly. "You can reach the terraces easily now, and afterwards rest at Rotorua before returning to Auckland. There is also another reason."

"What is that?" inquired Massinger, as he saw the girl's face change, and her eyes once more become clouded over with the mysterious sadness which from time to time dimmed her brightest expression.

"I am nearly certain that there will be an outbreak —perhaps even war declared—before we return. In that case——"

"In that case I should join the first body of volunteers I could come at, or your own loyal tribe, if it remains so."

"I have every belief that Waka Nene will remain as true to your people as he was in the old war, when he fought against Heke, and did such good work in beating back Kawiti. My mother's brother, a noted chief, died fighting for your people. But this will bring the tribes nearer together; they may make common cause against the pakeha. It will be a fight to the death. Some of the friendly tribes may waver. I would advise your going to your own people without delay from Rotorua."

"And how about a guide? Warwick may not care to undertake the task in the face of—what may happen."

"In that case"—and as she spoke, her inmost soul seemed to look forth in high resolve through the lustrous eyes, now informed with the mystic fire of the sybil—"I will ensure you a guide who knows the secret paths even better than Warwick."

Massinger said no more. The countenance of Warwick wore a look of mingled doubt and admiration, after which he ordered the attendant natives to make the usual arrangements for a camp.

"We shall need no fire, that is one thing," he said, turning to the Englishman.

"How is that?" he inquired.

"Nature is good enough to contract for the cooking here, which is the least she can do before she blows them all up some fine day. Just watch these people directly."

As indeed he did, much marvelling.

First of all, two of the women cleared a space, about three feet long and two wide, in the warm earth; into this they placed a layer of stones, which they covered with leaves. Upon this were placed the pork, the *kumeras*, and some pigeons shot on the way, all of which were rapidly and satisfactorily cooked. The evening meal, so miraculously prepared, as it seemed, having been concluded, Erena retired with her female attendants, pleading the necessity for a night's rest to prepare them for the opening day of the Great Exhibition. The two men walked up and down, smoking the meditative pipe. But long after his companion had retired to rest, Massinger lay awake, unable to sleep amid the strange, almost preternatural, features of the locality, while the anticipation of a war between his countrymen and this stubborn and revengeful people taxed his brain with incessantly recurring thoughts.

What would be the first act in the drama? He thought of isolated families of the settlers, now living in apparent peace and security, abandoned to the cruelty of a remorseless enemy. Would the horrors of Indian warfare be repeated? Would a partial

success, which, from their advantageous position, and the absence of any large body of regular troops, the natives were likely to gain, be avenged by merciless slaughter? In either case, what bloodshed, agony, wrongs irrevocable and unspeakable, were certain to ensue! What would be the outcome? He thought of the farmsteadings he had seen, with neat homesteads, garnered grain, contented hardy workers, their rosy-cheeked children playing amidst the orchards. Were these to be left desolate, burned, ravaged, as would be inevitable with all outside the line of defence? Then, again, the populous *kaingas*, with grave *rangatiras* and stalwart warriors; the merry chattering *wahines*, sitting amid their children when the day was over, much like other people's wives and children, enjoying far more natural comfort than the British labourers' families—were they also to be driven from their pleasant homes, starved, harried, pursued night and day by the avenger of blood? Like the heathen of old, dislodged by the chosen people with so little mercy? The carefully kept *kumera* plantations, so promising for another season, were they to be plundered or destroyed? The lines from Keble returned to his memory—

"It was a piteous sight, I ween, to mark the heathen's toil—
The limpid wells, the orchards green, left ready for the spoil."

Was all this murder and misery to take place because the representatives of a great nation differed with a quasi-barbarous, but distinctly dignified, lord of the manor about the title to an area of comparatively small value when compared with the millions of acres of arable and pasture still for sale, undisputed?

A contention as to title by English law ousted

the jurisdiction of magistrates in an assault case. Why should not this paltry squabble about an insignificant portion await an authoritative legal decision? No people apparently understood the deliberate verdict of a Court better than these Maoris. Delay, even protracted delay, would have been truly wise and merciful in view of the grisly alternative of war. Such a war, too, as it was likely to be!

However, though Erena and Warwick were confident of a fight, no official notice had yet reached them. It might yet be avoided, and so hoping, after hearing with increasing distinctness all manner of strange and fearful sounds, above, around, beneath, our traveller fell asleep.

The morning proved fine. As Massinger left his couch, the half-arisen sun was reluming a landscape neither picturesque nor alluring. Wild and wondrous it certainly was; upon such the eyes of the pakeha had never before rested. The elements had apparently been at play above and below the earth's surface, which showed signs of no common derangement. Rugged defiles, strangely assorted hillocks of differing size, colour, and elevation. A scarred volcanic cone poured out steam from its base upward, while, between the whirling mists, igneous rocks glinted, like red-hot boulders, in the morning sun. Near this strange mountain was a lake, the glittering green of which contrasted with the darkly red incrustations heaped upon its margin. Looking southward, a sense of Titanic grandeur was added to the landscape by a vast snow-covered range, on the hither side of which, he had been told, lay the waters of the historic Taupo —Taupo Moana, "The Moaning Sea."

CHAPTER VII

STROLLING back to camp, his movements were quickened by observing that the rest of the party had finished the morning meal, and were only awaiting his arrival to commence the first day's sight-seeing. After a council of war, it was finally decided to remain in the valley for the rest of the day, making for Taupo and Rotomahana on the morrow.

"In this valley of Waiotapu," said Warwick, "you have a good idea, on a small scale, of Rotomahana and the terraces. The same sorts of pools are on view; you have also the feeling of being on the lid of a boiling cauldron, and can realize most of the sensations belonging to a place where you may be boiled alive or burnt to death at any moment."

"A romantic ending," replied Massinger; "but I don't wish to end my New Zealand career in such a strictly Maori fashion. What is one to do, to avoid incensing the *Atua* of this very queer region?"

"Be sure to follow me or Erena most carefully, and do not step away from the path, or into any water that you have not tried. One traveller did so, and, as it was at boiling heat, died next day, poor fellow! So now, let us begin. Do you see this yellow water-

basin? This is the champagne pool. For the champagne, watch this effect." Here a couple of handfuls of earth were thrown in. Thereupon the strange water commenced to effervesce angrily, the circles spreading until the outermost edges of the pool were reached. "The outlet, you see, is over that slope, and is known as the Primrose Falls. But we must not linger. Beyond that boiling lake, with the steam clouds hanging over it, lies a terrace, gradually sloping, with ripples in the siliceous deposit, finally ending in miniature marble cascades."

"All this is wonderful and astonishing, but it is only the beginning of the play. I shall reserve my applause until the last act. I have been in strange places abroad, but never saw so many different sorts of miracles in one collection. What are those cliffs, for instance, so white and glistening?"

"The Alum Cliffs, sparkling with incrustations of alum. You notice that they rise almost perpendicularly from the hot-water pools? In contrast, the colour of the surrounding earth varies from pale yellow to Indian red and crimson. Some of the crystals you see around are strongly acid. The pools are all sorts of colours: some like pots of red paint, others green, blue, pink, orange, and cream."

"Evidently Nature's laboratories. What she will evolve is as yet unknown to us. Let us hope it will be more or less beneficial."

"It is hard to say," replied Warwick, musingly. "There is a legend among the Maoris that, many generations since, this valley, now so desolate, was covered with villages, the soil being very productive; that the inhabitants displeased the local Atua, upon

which he ordered a volcano in the neighbourhood to pour forth its fiery flood. An eruption followed, which covered the village many feet deep with the scoria and mud which, in a hardened state, you now see."

"Highly probable. I can believe anything of this sulphur-laden Valley of the Shadow. And did the mountain disappear also?"

"No! there he stands, three thousand feet high, quite ready, if one may judge from appearances, for another fiery shower. Let us hope he will not do it in our time. In the mean time, look at this Boiling Lake. Is not the water beautifully blue? And what clouds of steam! It is much the same, except in size, as the one above the Pink Terrace."

The day wore on as they rambled from one spot to another of the magical region.

"It is a city of the genii," said Massinger, as he watched the guide apply a match to one of a number of metallic-looking mounds, which promptly caught fire, and blazed until quenched. "Where in the world, except a naphtha lake, could one find such an inflammable rest for the sole of one's foot? I believe the place is one-half sulphur, and the other imprisoned fire, which will some day break forth and light up such a conflagration of earth, sky, and water, as the world has not seen for centuries. See here"—as, driving the end of his walking-stick into the crumbling earth, it began to smoke—"it is too hot to hold already."

The sun was low, as the little party, having lunched at a bungalow specially erected for tourists, took the homeward route.

"There is one more sight, and not the least of the

series," said Warwick, as they approached a curious soot-coloured cone, from which, of course, steam ascended, and strange sounds, with intermittent groanings, made themselves heard.

"The powers be merciful to us mortals, who can but believe and tremble!" ejaculated Massinger. "What demon's kitchen is this?"

"Only a mud volcano," answered Warwick. "Let us climb to the top and look in."

The mound, formed by the deposit of dried mud, some ten or twelve feet high, was easily ascended. Open at the top, it was filled with a boiling, opaque mass of seething, bubbling mud. Ever and anon were thrown up fountain-like spurts, which turned into grotesque shapes as they fell on the rim of the strange cauldron. A tiny dab fell upon Erena's *kaitaka*. She laughed.

"It will do this no harm; but it might have been my face. A mud scald is long of healing."

"What an awful place to fall into alive!" said Massinger, as he gazed at the steaming, impure liquid. "Is it known that any one ever slipped over the edge?"

"More than one, if old tales are true," said Warwick; "but they were *thrown in*, with bound hands, after battle. It was a choice way of disposing of a favourite enemy. He did not always sink at once; but none ever came out, dead or alive."

"Let us go on!" said Erena, impatiently. "I cannot bear to think of such horrors. I suppose all nations did dreadful things in war."

"And may again," interposed Warwick. "These people were not worse than others long ago. The Druids, with their wicker cages filled with roasting

victims, were as well up to date as my Maori ancestors. Luckily, such things have passed away for ever."

"Let us trust so," said Massinger, feelingly.

Erena made no answer, but walked forward musingly on the track which led in the direction of the camp.

"Though narrow, it appears to have been much used," he remarked.

"It is an old war-path," replied the guide. "When the Ngapuhi came down from Maketu on their raids, they mostly used this route. I am not old enough to have seen anything of Heke's war in '45. It was the first real protest against the pakeha. The natives were beginning to be afraid, very reasonably, that the white man would take the whole country. If the tribes had been united, they could have defied any force then brought against them, and driven your people into the sea."

"And why did they not make common cause?"

"The old story. Blood-feuds had embittered one tribe against another. Chiefs of ability and forecast, like Waka Nene and Patuone, his brother, saw that they must be beaten in the long run. They allied themselves with the British. They had embraced Christianity, and remained faithful to the end, fighting against the men of their own blood without the least regard to their common origin."

"I need not ask you," said Massinger, "on which side your sympathies are enlisted."

"No! it goes without saying," answered the guide. "I have had a fair education; I have been about the world, and I cannot help recognizing the resistless power of England, against which it would be madness

to contend. I should never think of joining the natives in case of war. A war which is coming, from all I hear. At the same time, I cannot help feeling for them. Amid these woods, lakes, and through these mountains and valleys, their ancestors roamed for centuries. No people in the world are more deeply attached to their native land. Think how hard for them to be dispossessed."

"And have you an alternative to offer?"

"None whatever, if war breaks out. It is idle to expect that New Zealand, able to support millions of civilized people, should be abandoned to less than a hundred thousand savages; for such, with exceptions, I am afraid I must call them. As for justice and mercy in dealing with conquered races, these are mere words. *Force* is the only law, as it has ever been. What mercy did the Maoris show to their conquered enemies? They slew, enslaved, tortured—and worse! They exterminated weak tribes, and took their lands. They have little ground for complaint if a nation stronger in war applies the same measure to them."

"I congratulate you," said Massinger, "upon the logical view which you take of the question. But is there no way of reconciling the interests of the colonists and the children of the soil?"

"Certainly. If they are cool enough on both sides to adjourn this paltry dispute about the Waitara block until it can be settled by legal authority or arbitration, war might be avoided. No people are more obedient to law, when they properly understand it. They are naturally litigious, and enjoy a good long-winded law-suit. If they were convinced that they were getting fair play in an arbitration, which I should recommend—

and there are available men, like Mannering or Waterton, who understand thoroughly the people and their customs, and are trusted by both sides—I believe they would cheerfully abide by an award."

"Then as to the sale of lands, disputed titles, upset price, and so on?"

"I believe that they are getting justice from the present land tribunals apart from political pressure, which would weaken in time; and if they do not get it from England, I do not know, speaking from experience and reading, from what other nation to expect it. There must be delay and litigation, but they will be satisfied in the end."

"And if not, and war breaks out?"

"Then there will be bloodshed to begin with, murder, outrage; all things which lead to unpardonable crimes on both sides; blood-feuds which will last for generations."

"A man like you might do much good in the legislature. Why do you not come forward, when inferior people of my own nation, from what I hear, degrade our parliamentary system?"

"The time is not yet," he answered. "We shall soon have other matters to think of. When we get back to Auckland there will be very little political business for some time to come."

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Onward, and still onward. Fresh marvels of scenery seemed hourly opening before them. In pride of place, Tongariro, fire-breathing Titan, with volcanic cone, encircled by his stupendous mountain range. As they gazed, the ceaseless steam-clouds, now enveloping the summit, now wind-driven sportively, as if by a

giant's breath, exposed to view the darkened rim of the crater.

To the right of Tongariro, more than five thousand feet in height, they saw the heaven-piercing bulk of Ruapehu (eight thousand nine hundred feet), cloud-crowned, lava-built, but girdled with ice-fields at a lower altitude; and at the base, arising from gloomy forests, valleys seamed and fissured, precipices, ravines, and outlined terraces.

"What a land of contrasts!" said the Englishman. "The sublime, the dread and awful, the idyllic and peaceful rural, seem mingled together in the wildest profusion; fire and water conflicting furiously in the same landscape. Nature appears to have thrown her properties and elements about without plan or method."

"A strange country!—a strange people!" exclaimed Erena. "Is that what you are thinking of? Surely you cannot expect an ordinary population amid scenes like these. I fear that we resemble our country in being calm as the sleeping sea, until the storm of passion is aroused."

"And then?" queried he.

"Then, if we feel injured, cruel as the grave, merciless, remorseless. So beware of us! We make bad enemies, I confess; but, then, we are always ready to die for our friends."

"I am numbered, I trust, among that favoured class, am I not?" he continued, as he gazed at the girl's face, wearing as it did a sudden look of high-souled resolve.

So might have looked, so posed, the daughter of Jephthah; so, scorning fate and the dark death, stood Iphigenia as she awaited the blow of doom.

The expression of her face changed ; a wistful, half-pleading look came into her eyes.

"Why ask?" she said softly. "You know that you are ; that you always will be."

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And now, after a passage across the pumice-strewn levels, lo! Taupo the sacred, Taupo-Moana, the moaning sea.

There was no thought of unsatisfied expectation as Massinger gazed upon the glorious sheet of water, over which the eye wandered until the darksome shadows of Kaimandwa and Tankaru dimmed its azure surface—the vast mountain range, from which, on Tongariro, a mathematically correct cinder-cone sprang upwards, like the spire of a gigantic minster.

On the other side, the peak of Tauhara, 3600 feet in height, stood out in lone majesty. The twin Titan, Ruapehu, bared his enormous shoulder to the unclouded sky. The day was wonderfully fine, having the softened atmospheric tone peculiar to the later summer months of the northern island. Then gradually a delicate haze crept over the horizon, shading the stern outlines of the dark-browed Alp. The foot-hills seemed to have approached through the clear yet tinted lights of the fading day.

"When have I seen such a panorama before?" thought Massinger. "What vastness, what sublimity, in all its component parts! Then, as columns of steam rose in the far distance, completing the weird and abnormal effects of the unfamiliar vision, speech, even exclamation, appeared to fail him.

"Yonder stands the *pah* of his Majesty, King Te Heu Heu, the head chief of all this district," interposed Warwick. "We must send forward a herald and pay our respects, or our visit may not be so successful. He has a queer temper, and is as proud as if he had been sent from heaven. There is his castle."

"Warwick is right," said Erena, coming up at this juncture and arousing herself from the reverie into which she, too, appeared to have fallen. "This is his kingdom, and we must do *tika*. We can rest for to-night, however, and give Te Heu Heu the second proper warning, so that he can receive us in state. I wish you could have seen the *real* Te Heu Heu, however."

"Why so? and what was his special distinction?"

"Something truly uncommon, personally. You would then have carried away an idea of a Maori Rangatira—one of the olden time. A giant in stature, he must have resembled old Archibald Douglas in 'Marmion'—'So stern of look, so huge of limb.' He lived in a valley some distance from here, among the hills you see yonder. But life in these regions has always been uncertain. One fine night—or perhaps it was a stormy one, for there had been a deluge of rain—the soil about here in the valley, even the rocks, they say, became loosened and came down in a kind of avalanche. It filled the whole valley, covering up Te Heu Heu, his people, his wives and children, numbering in all some seventy souls. They were never seen alive or heard of any more. There was a lament composed by his brother to his memory. I remember a verse or two.

'LAMENT FOR TE HEU HEU.

'See o'er the heights of dark Tauhara's peak
The infant morning wakes. Perchance my friend
Returns to me clad in that lightsome cloud.
Alas! I toil alone in this cold world; for thou art gone.

'Go, thou mighty one! Go, thou hero!
Go, thou that wert a spreading tree to shelter
Thy people, when evil hovered round.
Ah! what strange god has caused so dread a death
To thee and thy companions?

'The mount of Tongariro rises lonely in the South,
While the rich feathers that adorned thy great canoe, Arawa,
Float on the wave. And women from the West look on and weep.
Why hast thou left behind the valued treasures
Of thy famed ancestor Rongo-maihua,
And wrapped thyself in night?'

There are as many more verses," said Erena, "but I have forgotten them. They all express the deepest feeling of grief—almost despair—as, indeed, do most of the Maori love-songs and laments. The grief was by no means simulated in the case of relations. I know myself of several suicides which took place immediately after funerals or disappointments in love."

"There is strong poetic feeling, with a high degree of imagination, in the native poems and orations," said Massinger. "It is a pity that these recitations should die out."

"The Te Heu Heu we refer to was a remarkable man," said Warwick. "Standing as near seven feet as six, he looked, I have heard people say, the complete embodiment of the Maori chief of old days—terrible in peace or war; and, arrayed in his cloak of ceremony,

with the *huia* feathers in his hair, and his *mere-pounamou* in his right hand, was enough to strike terror into the heart of the bravest."

"Didn't he refuse to sign the Treaty of Waitangi?" said Massinger.

"Of course he did. It was just like his pride and disdain of a superior. 'You may choose to be slaves to the pakeha,' he said scornfully to the assembled chiefs, as he turned away; 'I am Te Heu Heu!'"

The *pah*, or fortress, of the present chieftain was one of considerable strength and pretension, covering an area of nearly five acres. Reared upon a promontory which prevented assault, except by water, on three sides, it was well calculated to defy all manner of enemies in the good old days before breechloaders and artillery. The whole area was walled in, so to speak, with excessively strong palisades, the only entrance being by heavy sliding gates. This historic keep possessed all the natural advantages of the sites selected for the purpose, with the important addition of unlimited water-supply. Scarcity of the indispensable requisite, rarely possible to secure on the summit of a hill, often led to the surrender of the castle when besieged for sufficient time to exhaust the water-store. One of the ancient Maori romances, indeed, describes the dramatic incident of a beleaguered garrison, including the aged chief, at the point of death from thirst. The youthful leader of the besieging force, touched by the beauty of his daughter, the far-famed Ranmahora, relieves the veteran's suffering, and naturally receives the hand of the maiden, after which peace is ratified, amid general congratulations.

Te Heu Heu's *pah* might be considered to be almost impregnable, having in addition to the trenches and galleries, double and treble lines of defence, which in other days proved so formidable to regular troops. Besides these were lines of pits, lightly covered over and thus used to entrap enemies. Also, another series used for storing provisions. When understood that these well-planned and scientific strongholds were constructed by a barbaric race with but stone and wooden implements, one can but wonder at the patient industry, joined to a high order of intelligence, displayed in their formation.

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Sunrise all goldenly reluming a wonder-world! The calm waters of the lake stretching beyond the limit of vision as they gazed upon the sea-like expanse; the dread mountain kings crowned with eternal snow, girt with fire, ringed with ice-fields, based on primeval forests! Mortal man surely never looked upon so strange a scene—so crowded with all the elements of beauty, terror, and sublimity.

"Well worth the voyage," thought Massinger—"the dissevering of familiar ties and associations—but to have enjoyed this intoxicating experience!" How poor, how narrow the life which contented his compatriots!—which contented *him* before the Great Disaster, when his flight to this Ultima Thule appeared the welcome resort of a man careless of the future, if only relief might be gained from the intolerable anguish of the present.

Now how different were his feelings! The hard fare, the toilsome march, the hourly novelty, the certainty of adventure, and the approach of danger,

seemed to have changed not only his habits of thought, but his very nature. As he reflected upon the exhaustless field of enterprise which seemed opening around him, he almost shouted aloud with the joy of living and the anticipation of triumph.

Warwick had made an early visit to the potentate, who was, as he well knew, monarch of all he surveyed in the region of Taupo Moano. He had enlarged upon the rank and wealth of Massinger until a cloud was cleared from the mind of the chief, not unreasonably disposed to connect the arrival of an unknown pakeha with designs upon his hereditary lands.

When assured that his visitor was only moved by curiosity to behold the wonders of which all the world had heard, as well as to pay a visit of ceremony to the great chief Te Heu Heu, he became mollified, and expressed his desire to converse with the Rangatira Pakeha, who had come across the sea to behold the great lake Taupo and the wonder-mountains. Tongariro and Ruapehu.

At the hour of midday, therefore, Massinger, accompanied by Warwick and Erena, presented himself before the chief, who, standing in front of a *wharepuni* of unusual size, with elaborate carvings upon its massive doorposts, received him with perfect dignity and self-possession. The remainder of the party had been left with the camp-stores and belongings, it not having been thought necessary to include them in the interview.

The chief relaxed his stern features as Erena approached, and said a few words in his native tongue to her, which she answered with quiet composure. He then turned to Warwick, who appeared anxious

to explain their position, and mentioned the name of Waka Nene, which produced a distinct effect upon the chief's manner and demeanour.

"You are on the path to Rotomahana," said he. "It is a far journey to see the boiling fountain and the white steps of Te Tarata."

Massinger, through the guide: "I have heard much of these strange things. I have seen pictures of them. We have no hot lakes or burning mountains in my country."

"Then you will see them and go away; you are a strange people. You do not want to buy the land? No? I would sell you some if you would live here."

It was explained to the chief that the pakeha desired land that would grow corn. The land around Taupo was good to look at, but not for farmers. He thought he would buy land near Auckland.

"Does the pakeha know that there is much talk of war in the land? The Mata Kawana at Waitemata is deceived by bad men. He is paying Teira for land which is not his to sell. If the Mata Kawana takes it by force, there will be blood—much blood. Te Rangituke will not suffer the land of his people to be taken. *Akore, akore!*"

"This pakeha does not come to fight; he wishes to live on land near the Maoris. He will pay them money and buy the land."

"The pakeha is good; his word is strong. I should much like him to live here. Let him ask Erena in marriage from her father, and his days will be many."

"The pakeha does not desire to marry just at present, even if Erena would accept him. His heart

is in his own land. He wishes to see all the country before he settles down."

"That is well. The bird flies all round before he perches. But if the tribes dance the war-dance, on account of this trouble about the Waitara, what will he do then? The first *taua* of the Ngatiawa that he meets will kill him."

"The pakeha is brave. He can shoot a man afar off. He will go back to Waitemata or die. He has also a letter from Waka Nene."

"That is good for the Arawa and the Ngapuhi, but the Waikato will not regard it. It may be that the white man's Atua will keep him from harm."

With which sentiment the audience terminated.

With the exception of the world-famed terraces, no spot on earth was so rich in strange and wondrous surroundings as this great lake of unfathomable depth, a thousand feet above the sea, sleeping amidst its volcanic blocks of quartzose lava and huge masses of pumice-stone. To the north-west they gazed at the wooded ridges of Rangi-toto and Tuhua, and, three thousand feet above the sea, the bare turreted pyramids of Titerau, towering in pride, as might, on the castled Rhine, the ruined fortress of a forgotten robber-baron. White pumice-stone cliffs gleaming in the sun bordered the eastern shore. Behind the sombre forest ranges, pyramidal monoliths, piercing the heavens at yet greater altitudes, gave to this amazing landscape the fantastic aspect of a dream-world.

"When shall we awaken?" said Massinger, as he and Erena, lingering behind their guide as they strolled towards the camp, became conscious that the day was declining. "This is the newest land of

enchantment. I feel like a lotus-eater, removed from the world of everyday life. I could almost be tempted to cast in my lot with this careless-living race, wandering here till life grew dim, and the distinctions between what our fathers used to call right and wrong faded into uncertainty. I can imagine some men doing it."

"But not you. Oh! do not talk in that reckless fashion. Another might waste his life among these poor ignorant people; but you have a man's work yet to do in the world—a name to make, a family to remember. But"—as he smiled at her vehemence—"you are only joking; you are laughing at the poor Maori girl, who thought for a moment that you were in earnest. Let us walk faster; it will soon be dark, and we have some distance still to go."

A change seemed suddenly to have come over the spirit of the girl. From being carelessly playful in manner, as she had been in their rambles all the day, she became silent and reserved till they reached the camp. There she retired at once to where the other women had fixed their quarters, merely remarking that they would have to leave early if they hoped to reach the terraces.

The night was strangely, magically lovely. Massinger had no great desire to sleep. He felt, indeed, that one might easily watch till dawn amid this region of magic and sorcery. Brightly burned the stars in the dark blue heavens. There was no moon, but the constellations, to his excited fancy, seemed strangely lustrous and of intense, almost unreal, brilliancy. Warwick and he stood near their camp fire, only occasionally speaking, when all suddenly

there arose a wild shout, then a succession of cries, from the direction of Te Heu Heu's *pah*, which pointed to some unusual occurrence. A wailing cry came, too, from the natives of their own encampment, whom they observed to have left their *whares* and gathered in a group.

"What is the meaning of all this?" said Massinger, who had been gazing over the lake, and listening to the low calls and whispering notes of the water-fowl which sailed in flocks amid its sedges and reeds. "What do they mean by that long-drawn sound? And now there is a shout—a sort of herald's proclamation."

"You are right," said Warwick. "The Tohunga calls aloud, 'Behold the sacred fire on Tongariro! The Atua commands war. Listen, O men of the Arawa.

"'The pakeha desires to take the country of the *nga iwi* (the tribes). He will take the forests and the kumera plantations, the valleys and the mountains, the rivers and the shores of the sea. The Maori canoe will no longer be paddled on the broad bosom of the Waikato, on lakes which have been our fathers since they came from Hawaiki. The steamboat will drive away the Maori canoe; the sheep and cattle of the pakeha will feed on our plantations; the white magistrates will put our young men in prison; our old men will break stones for the pakeha roads. We shall all be slaves, working for a pakeha conqueror.

"'Shall we be slaves, or shall we unite and march against the pakeha?'"

A thousand voices shouted till the echoes by the lake shore rang again with cries as of one man—

"*Akore, akore, akore!*"

"If we are not willing to be slaves, shall the tribes,

the Waikato and the Ngatiawa, join together and drive the pakeha into the sea from whence he came?"

Then one more deep-drawn shout of assent resounded through the still night-air.

"You see what the feeling is," said Warwick, turning as he spoke. "Look yonder, and behold the fire on Tongariro!"

Massinger swung round, and, to his great surprise, saw amidst a cloud of steam, high up on the mountain, a red band of fire, which seemed to encircle the upper portion of the cinder-cone which formed so remarkable an addition to the summit. A fresh volume of steam rose pillar-like from the crater, while from time to time angry bursts of flame issued from the top and sides of the cone.

"A very grand sight," he said; "but what is there to create such a disturbance? It is surely not an unusual occurrence in this land of imprisoned fires? Is that the meaning of all this outcry?"

"That, and nothing else," replied the guide; "but it is by no means an ordinary occurrence. It is now many years since such a thing has taken place. But all the excitement arises out of an old superstition."

"And what may that be?"

"In olden times the appearance of fire upon Tongariro was regarded as a mandate from their Atua to wage war—which they invariably did. Occasions were not far to seek, as there was always a weaker tribe to attack or a strong one to measure forces with. But now it means more—much more. And that is why these natives are so excited."

"But why should it mean more now?"

"For this reason. Every tribe in the North Island knows that this Waitara land trouble is likely to cause a break-out at any moment. They look upon this fire on Tongariro as a call to arms against the whites; and if there has been serious dispute at Waitara there will be a war, and a bloody one, as sure as we stand here."

"And with what result?"

"Of course, they will be beaten in the end. But it will be a longer business than people would think. The tribes are armed, and, having made money for some years past, these Waikato and Ngatihaua have invested in firearms. They have the advantage of knowing every foot of the country, and your troops will fight at a disadvantage. However, I see Te Heu Heu's people are quiet again, and our party have returned to their *whares;* so we may as well turn in."

Next morning Massinger was surprised at Erena's altered expression. Her usually bright and mirthful manner had given way to one of brooding depression; he in vain attempted to rally her.

"Surely you do not accept this natural occurrence as a command from Heaven? What possible connection can it have with the war, which I think unlikely to take place, in spite of Warwick's opinion."

"He knows more than you do," she answered—"possibly more than I myself, though of course the natives talk to me freely. But something tells me, in a manner that I cannot describe, that there will be war. And what the end of it may be for you, for me, for all of us, no mortal can tell."

"But surely it must be short," he answered. "Troops and ships will come from the other colonies

—from England, even—if war is once declared. Then what chance will these misguided natives have?"

"You will see—you will see," she said. "Pray God it may not be so; and, indeed, my father's daughter ought to fear nothing. It is not for myself. No!" she said, raising her head proudly, "if I could die, like the women of old, for my country, for my people, all would be easy. But I see worse things in the future—burning houses, women and children lying dead, the young and old; the settlers driven from their farms, after all their hard work and care; among our people the slaughter of warriors, the chiefs lying dead, the women and children starving! Oh, it is a terrible picture! I dreamed that blood had been shed, that more was to come."

"Why, you must be a prophetess!" said he, still striving to lead her from such dark forebodings. "You have been over-excited. I would not ridicule your ideas for a moment, but, as we can hear and do nothing till we get to Rotorua, suppose we agree to put off the mention of terrible things which may never come to pass, and enjoy what time we have among these lovely terraces."

"After all," she said, as a smile rippled over her expressive countenance, effacing for the moment every trace of depression, "perhaps it is the better way. Life is short at the best, and we need not cloud it more than we can help. We are now close to Tarawera, in some respects the most wonderful place of the whole collection. Isn't there a peculiar grandeur about it? The name means 'burnt cliffs.' Look at the rocky bluffs, shaded by those beautiful *pohutus!* That is Tarawera Mountain, with a crown of trees.

And see, that is our path that leads to Rotomahana, by the south shore of the lake."

"We have now," said Warwick, "about ten miles to travel before we reach Rotomahana. The path is well marked but steep, and a fair climb."

The famous lake, when reached, was to Massinger somewhat disappointing. It owed nothing to mere extent or picturesque surroundings—a verdant-appearing sheet of water, with marshy shores, surrounded by treeless hills, covered with low-growing fern. But its marvels were strongly in evidence. Its title to distinction rests upon its high temperature and intense, incessant thermal activity. Boiling water on either shore issues from the soil. Pools of hot mud were frequent in the marshes; gas-bubbles in the open lake indicated a higher temperature near certain parts. There it was dangerous to bathe (according to Warwick), though at no great distance the water was merely lukewarm. Springs of various characters abounded, totally different from each other—alkaline, saline, arsenical, sulphurous. The feathered tribes of swimmers and waders, protected by the tribe until the appointed season, were in flocks innumerable, various of size, hue, and habit. The splendid *pukeha* (*Porphyrio milanotus*), the graceful *torea*, or oyster-eater (*Hæmatopus piccatus*), the beautiful white-necked "paradise" duck, with countless congeners, held high revel, after the manner of their kind.

Here might one fancy that one of great Nature's laboratories had been arrested until its beneficent purpose was fulfilled; that, until the missing cycle of centuries had rolled by, some high and glorious development of the Almighty Hand had been delayed;

that vain man had intruded upon the scene, with his accustomed assurance, before the creative scheme had been declared complete.

As the little group stood on *Te Terata*, or "tattooed rock," projecting with terraced marble steps into the lake, Massinger held his breath in wonder and admiration while the glories of this unequalled pageantry of the elements broke upon his senses. Earth and air, fire and water, were here represented in strange propinquity and hitherto unknown combinations.

A hundred feet above them, on the slope of the fern-clad hill, they came to a huge boiling caldron, enclosed in a crater with walls forty feet high, open only on the lake side. The basin, spring-fed, is nearly a hundred feet long, and more than half as wide. Brimful was it with translucent water, which, in that snow-white incrustated basin, was of an intense turquoise blue. Cloud-masses of steam, reflecting the lovely colour and confining the view, while enhancing the effect, were pierced with the ceaseless sounds, which are almost cries, of the tormented water. The silicious deposit presented the appearance of a cataract, which, dashing itself over a succession of gradually lowered platforms, has been suddenly turned into stone. The effect has been deliciously rendered by Mr. Domett in his glorious poem, "Ranulph and Amohia"—

> "A cataract, carved in Parian stone,
> Or any purer substance known,
> Agate or milk-white chalcedon,
> Its showering snow cascades appear.
> Long ranges bright of stalactite,
> And sparry frets and fringes white,
> Thick falling plenteous, tier on tier,
> Its crowding stairs."

The silicates deposited from the ever-flowing water had formed on the slope a succession of terraces of purest white imaginable, such as no Parian marble could surpass—delicate, pure, polished as of glass, the lines of tracery like the finest lace, the colouring of a lustre and variety unique and unparalleled.

The system of terraces and basins covered several acres. Centuries, nay æons, must have been required for the slow accumulation of these exquisite formations. Commencing at the lake with shallow basins, while farther up, the higher terraces, from three to six feet high, are formed by a number of semicircular stages varying in height. Each has a raised margin, from which the slender stalactites hang down upon the lower stage, encircling one or more basins, filled with water of the purest, most resplendent blue. The smaller cups represent so many natural baths, which connoisseurs of the most refined luxury could scarce have equalled—of different size and depth, too, with every degree of temperature.

On reaching the highest terrace, they arrived at an extensive platform, upon which were other basins of temperature equally high.

A rocky island, covered with ferns and lycopodiums, enabled them to view at ease the steaming water of the caldron, and to mark the varying colours and strong effects—the virgin white, the turquoise blue, the vivid green of the surrounding vegetation, the crude red of the bare walls of the crater, with the whirling clouds of steam, the delicate shapes of the pure marble-seeming stalactites, the incrustated branches, with every leaf and twig snow white, all combined in phantasmal, unearthly beauty.

"What do you think of my country now?" said Erena, as they stood side by side, gazing at this enchanted scene.

"The most marvellous play of light and colour that my eyes ever rested on," said he. "I shall recall it to my dying day. It is a privilege to have lived through such an experience. Our old friend of the Arabian Nights uses the only forms of description that can approach it."

"I have been here more than once," said Erena, "but I never felt its charm so keenly as on this occasion. My father has a poetic soul and much scientific knowledge; he carefully explained to me its various beauties. But he was of opinion that some day a tremendous convulsion would take place and ruin all these glories for ever."

"What a dreadful idea! I am afraid you must have inherited a turn for prophesying evil. I must confess, however, that these imprisoned fire-spirits, whatever they are, must have very little of the Maori nature in them, if they let us off without a burst up. And now, I suppose, it is 'Hey for Rotorua!'"

"I fear so," said the girl, with a half-sigh. "This fairylike wayfaring is too pleasant to last. We may hear news at Rotorua which will alter your plans."

"My plans are quite unfixed at present; but if war breaks out it is hard to say what one may have to do. I dare say I shall be in the thick of it."

"We must not forget that the pink terrace is yet to be seen, and we may never have another opportunity of seeing it together."

"I feel as if my mind would not contain any more of wonder and admiration, but we dare not

leave any of the wonders of this unearthly region unexplored."

Together, then, leaving Warwick to arrange for an early morning departure, they watched the great fountain of "Otuka-puarangi," on the west side of the lake, discharge his azure overflow into a series of terraces and basins. The fountain sprang from a platform sixty feet above the lake and a hundred yards long. The flooring on the terraces was of a delicate pink hue; hence their name. In the background was the great hot spring, a caldron of forty to fifty feet in diameter, its naked walls, like the first seen, coloured red, white, and yellow. At the foot of the terraces they saw the great *solfa-terra* Te Whaka-tara-tara.

The three principal personages remained in converse long after the usual time of separation. The night was fine, and the surroundings were foreign to the idea of early repose. The sounds of the fire-breathing agencies, above and below, grew more distinct in the hush of night. An occasional steam jet shooting into the air appeared like an emissary sent to warn of approaching danger.

"I should like to have seen the terraces by night," said Massinger, "but it is not a country for late travelling."

"No, indeed," said Warwick; "a false step, a stumble into the wrong pool, has before now cost a man his life. I once saw a poor dog scalded to death in a moment. I think you will find Rotorua and the Valley of Geysers sufficiently interesting. If you care for Maori legends, you should ask Erena to tell you the tale of her ancestress, the beautiful Hinemoa."

"What a pretty name! And was she an ancestress of yours? What did she do to acquire immortality? —for I have heard her name, as a heroine, without being told the legend."

"When we reach Rotorua, I will show you Mokoia, the island to which she swam," said Erena, with a smile. "Also the point Wai-rere-wai on the mainland, from which she started; besides the hot spring which she reached, close to her lover's village. It is a long swim, but I suppose the girls of her day were more accustomed to the water than we are now."

* * * * * *

The third day was nearing its close when the little party, having skirted the three-cornered deep blue lake of Taka-tapu, threaded the tangled forests over the Waipa plain, and ascended the bare hills of the range which looks on Rotorua. The lake, gleaming in the sunlight, lay beneath them, with the fumaroles, steam-hammers, and geysers of Whaka-rewa-rewa in full blast.

CHAPTER VIII

It was decided to camp on the border of the lake between the village of Ohinemutu, where the old historic *pah*, with its grim carven giants of the Wharepuni, looks frowningly down upon the little Roman Catholic chapel. Clouds of steam arose in all directions above them, while the scattered pools exhibited the pervading warmth combined with sulphur fumes.

"We are now on historic ground," said Warwick; "for, without counting Hinemoa—there is her island—all manner of legends abound; some of them horrible enough in all conscience, ghastly to a degree," he continued, gazing across the lake. "Mokoia looks peaceful enough now, with scarcely a hundred people on it all told. Yet what tales those rocks could tell! The island was a grand resort for the tribe in the days before gunpowder. In war-time they could paddle over from this side, and defy any enemy that had arrived on foot. There was no waterway to Rotorua. However, Hongi-ika-kai-tangata taught them a lesson."

"What was that?"

"When the tribe retired there, as usual, they did

not reckon on an unexpected move of the fiercest and most crafty chief of his day, and that is saying a good deal if all tales be true."

"How did he get over without boats; for I take it they didn't leave any canoes on the hither side?"

"Of course not. But he had plenty of man-power; so, after sacking the Arawa stronghold (in 1823) on the east coast, he dragged his fleet of canoes across by a road which he made to Lake Rotoiti, and, entering Rotorua, appeared with his fleet before the astonished lake tribes. He made straight for Mokoia, fell upon them with his customary ferocity, and, carrying all before him, put to death all who escaped the first assault. Of the whole seven hundred of the Arawa, not one is said to have escaped."

"What a tragedy! But, of course, such stratagems belonged to the accepted method of warfare of the period?"

"Yes," assented Warwick. "Almost where we stand now a chief's widow killed in cold blood (with the tribe and the mission school children looking on) a woman taken in war, as an offering to the memory of her husband. The missionary in vain attempted to prevent the sacrifice, the poor victim appealing piteously to some relative to help her. But the good man only endangered his own life, and did not succeed in saving hers. At Matamata, Te Waharoa's great fortress, when he was besieged by the Ngapuhi under Tareha, he made an unexpected sortie, and, capturing several prisoners, *crucified them* on the tall posts of the *pah*—just like those you see there—in the very sight of their friends, who retired in confusion. But I see Erena coming this way, so I must

stop these blood-curdling stories; she has a strong dislike to them."

While their appointed camp was being made ready, they were taken by Warwick to the site of the Lost Village, the scene of the extinction of a *hapu* of the tribe as sudden and complete as the destruction of that of Te Heu Heu.

They stood on a point of land running into the lake. It was floored with masses of pumice-stone, which the waves had worn into strange and fantastic shapes. Here had been the encampment. The sites of the dwellings, by no means unsubstantial, were marked by walls, of which the lower stones only remained. The apertures showed where the entrances had been. On one fatal night the whole promontory sank downwards, drowning the sleepers, and submerging for ever the homes where generations had lived and died.

Arrived at the camp, all things wore a most cheerful aspect. The chief, according to Maori custom with distinguished visitors, had sent down cooked food, mats, and other gifts, intimating through a messenger that he would be pleased to receive a visit from the pakeha rangatira at his convenience on the morrow.

Erena arranged to abide with her friends or relations until the morrow. The humbler natives asked leave of Warwick to bestow themselves in the village, while the sullen Ngarara, who had of late remained among the rank and file, announced his intention of coming for his pay in the morning, and terminating his engagement there and then.

Warwick displayed no surprise at this announcement, but told him that he might have his pay at

once. This offer he accepted, and departed with ill-concealed satisfaction.

"I am not sorry to get clear of him," he said; "he is a dangerous brute, and for some reason has taken a dislike to both of us. I can see it in his face. I had a hint, too, from one of the women not to trust him."

"What earthly reason can he have? He has been treated fairly all the way."

"Its hard to say. Maoris are like other people, good and bad. I hope there will be no war-scare till we get to Auckland, at any rate. He might take the occasion to do you a bad turn; so it will be well to be on your guard."

"Perhaps he will get as good as he brings," said Massinger, with the careless confidence of youth. "I shall keep my powder dry, at any rate."

It was late before the two men separated for the night. Warwick was led into legendary lore, of which he had a prodigious quantity. He told so many tales of battle, murder, and sudden death, that the Englishman dreamed of cannibal feasts, sieges, and pitched battles, with all manner of disquieting incidents, so that the sun had risen when he awakened after a broken night's rest.

His attendants were already in waiting, and before he had finished breakfast Erena arrived, looking fresh and animated. She had made some slight alteration in her dress, and had placed some of the beautiful feathers of the *huia* in her hair. Altogether, there was a change in her mien, a sparkle in her expressive eyes, a lightness in her step, an added tone of cheerfulness, which Massinger could hardly account for.

He could not avoid remarking upon it. "You are surely not pleased at our parting, Erena?" he said. "Warwick and I must start for Auckland almost at once."

"So soon?" she said. "I hoped you might find something to interest you here for a few days. There's nothing so beautiful as Te Terata or Rotomahana; still, there are strange things here too."

"It must all depend upon our news of the war. It would be unwise to linger here after real fighting has commenced."

"I would not have you do it for the world," said she. "But I have a reason for not wishing you to return before Monday which I cannot tell you now. You will trust me, will you not?"

The girl's deep eyes seemed to glow with unusual lustre as she made this appeal, stretching forth her hands pleadingly, while her lip quivered as she looked at him with a wistful expression he had never noticed before.

"I dare say you know best," he said; "and after all your kindness I could not refuse you anything. But really this life is too pleasant—too much in the way of holiday-making. I must begin to do some of the work for which I came so far."

"You need not fret yourself over that part of it," she said. "You will have plenty of time to do all that is necessary. Many Englishmen come out to buy land, but they all wish they had waited before investing their money."

"You only tell me what my friends said in Auckland," he answered. "I am sure your advice is good. And now for our friend the Ariki of the lake tribes."

Being joined by Warwick, they walked forward to the spot where the chief had located himself. He was surrounded by the elders of the tribe, as well as by a considerable body of natives, among whom Massinger noticed the ill-omened countenance of Ngarara.

"That fellow has been talking to the natives," said Warwick, "and whatever he has said, it is against us; I can see by the chief's face. I am glad that Erena is with us; she has great weight with the tribe."

The chief received them with a show of civility, but was evidently on his guard, as having had his suspicions aroused. He was anxious to know for what reason Massinger had travelled to Taupo and Rotorua after having come so far over the great sea.

"The pakeha is fond of strange sights. He has never seen anything like Te Terata before, and was most anxious to visit Rotorua, of which he had heard much; also to pay his respects to the chief Hika-iro, of whom he was told before he left Auckland."

"A word has been brought to me that the pakeha has come to see the *nga iwi* (the tribes), and to bring back to the man who rides at the head of the soldiers and to the Mata Kawana the names of the men that can be found for war in Rotorua."

"All untrue. This pakeha dislikes war, and only fights when men insult him. He desires to return to Auckland now that he has seen Te Terata, where he will buy land from the Maoris—perhaps set up a *whare-koko*."

"The pakeha's words are good, but who will say that they are straight? He may return to Waitemata, and tell the man who rides in front of the soldiers

with red clothes that the *pah* at Rotorua is old and has rotten timbers, so that it would be easy for the men with red coats and the men with blue ones to take it. Why is the daughter of Mannering among the women who are bearing burdens for the pakeha? Will she follow him, and plant kumeras in his fields?"

"She will speak for herself," said Erena, stepping forward with flashing eyes and scornful mien. "If my father were here he would teach that evil-minded man"—pointing to Ngarara—"to speak with respect of his daughter. What can he say? Have I not a right to walk in the same company as this pakeha, or any other? Is not the daughter of a war-chief free to choose her friends? Has not that always been the law and the custom of the Arawa?"

Here there was a murmur of assent among the spectators, particularly from the side where the women of the tribe were assembled, while contemptuous looks were directed at Ngarara, who stood with lowering countenance, unable to face the withering scorn with which the indignant maiden regarded him.

Here Warwick took up the argument, not unreasonably considering that the just anger of the girl might carry her beyond the limits of prudence, as she stood, with burning eyes and heaving bosom, ready to invoke the wrath of the gods upon the head of the traitor who had dared to misinterpret her motives. He pointed out that she had joined the party with the express sanction of the great chief of the Ngapuhi, whose written authority and safe conduct she held; that the other natives, male and female, had been hired for the expedition on liberal terms; that they had been already paid in part (here he

pointed to certain articles of apparel and ornament which they had lost no time in purchasing in Ohinemutu); that Ngarara, also, who had proved ungrateful and mischievous—"slave-like" and "a liar" were the Maori terms—had benefited by the pakeha's liberality: he had been paid in full. Here he named the sum, and pointed to a new hat, which the disloyal one had incautiously bought for himself. Upon him the eyes of the whole assembly were at once turned, and his countenance changed as a murmur of disapproval arose. Finally, the pakeha had assured him that he would send his friends from beyond the sea to see the wonders of Te Terata and Rotorua; they would bring trade and spend money like water for the benefit of the Arawa and the Ngapuhi.

Having thus spoken, using no mean quality of the oratorical power which is a natural gift of the Maori race, he produced Waka Nene's passport. This the chief (fortunately one of those who, like that veteran, had been taught to read and write by the early missionaries) perused with attention, while the whole tribe gazed with awe and reverence at the mysterious paper—the written word; the magic scroll! How often the herald of fate!

In this case, however, a triumphant success followed the perusal of the few lines in the handwriting, and signed with the name, of the great chief of the Ngapuhi, who, with more than a thousand warriors at his back, had formerly raided the Waikato and the Ngatimaru, carrying war and devastation through the length of the land.

"It is enough," he said, handing back the paper to Warwick. "The pakeha is a great rangatira. He

is the friend of Waka Nene, who sent Erena to show him the great fountain and the hot breath of Ruapehu ; he is now the friend of Hika-iro and all the lake tribes. As for you"—turning to Ngarara—"you are a bad man, a *kuri*, a *tutæ*. Go!"

The discomfited Ngarara slunk away, pursued by groans and hisses from the converted crowd, who, as is usual in such cases, were more vehement in their anger in proportion to the feeling of distrust which had marked their first impressions.

Peace having been restored, and the enemy routed with loss and dishonour, there remained no reason why Massinger should not devote the few days that remained to the exploration of this fascinating province of the wonderland. Rarely did the weather in that portion of the island remain steadfast to "set fair" for so many successive days as in this halcyon time.

Whether it was the excitement of the coming strife, which he could see by the manner of Warwick and Erena that they expected, the physical exhilaration produced by the medicated atmosphere, the association with the half-savage race, who now seemed ready to bow down before him almost with adoration, —one of these causes, or the whole combined, certainly found him in a condition of spiritual exaltation such as he had never before experienced, and in vain essayed to comprehend.

"After all," he told himself, "it will be my last holiday for months, possibly for years. I shall never, perhaps, have such another ideal wandering through a 'londe of faerye,' certainly never again have 'so fair a spirit to be my minister.' A region of marvels

and magic, a tribe of simple children of nature, ready to do my bidding! In this life of ours, so sad and mysterious at times, such conditions cannot last; why, then, should not one frankly accept a fragment of Arcadia?"

He lost no time in communicating his change of plan to Erena, whose features wore so radiant a smile at the announcement that he saw in it the fullest confirmation of the wisdom of his decision.

"I am so glad," she said, "that you are going to honour *my* country, *my* tribe, by your last visit among them. I was born here, have swum and paddled in the lake since I could walk; and though my father changed our abode to Hokianga, and dwelt there latterly, I have always loved Rotorua best in my heart."

For the next few days they roamed over the lakes and woods, the hills and dales, of this enchanted ground in unfettered companionship and joyous converse. They went in a canoe to Hinemoa's Isle, rowed by two Maori girls, and beheld the bath which bears her name to this day. They saw the beach on which stood the doomed Arawas, confident in the power of their hitherto inviolate wave. Here had they fallen; here had the cannibal feast, with all its horrid accompaniments, been held; here, where the grass grew thick and wild flowers waved to the very margin of the peaceful lake, had assailants and defenders waded in blood amid the dead and the dying.

And yet now how calm, how peaceful, was the historic water, how tranquil were all things, how happily flowed on the village life! Who could have believed that such horrors were transacted in this fairy

isle, where now the voices of children at play, the crooning, low-voiced song of the girls, as they plaited the flax mats or made with deft fingers the neat provision-baskets, were the only sounds that met the ear?

Together they climbed the rocky summit of the island, and viewed the strangely compounded landscape, heard the dire sounds as of groans and murmurings of imprisoned fire-spirits, while from time to time an impatient geyser in the haunted valley of Whaka-rewarewa would fling itself in cloud and steam heaven-wards with wildest fury.

Together they stood before the curious stone image, sacred under penalty of awful doom in the minds of the simple people, as having been brought in an ancestral canoe from the half-mythical Hawaiki in the dim traditionary exodus of the race. Together they forced their canoes up the glittering channel of Hamurama, and held their hands in the ice-cold fountain at its source, where it flows bubbling out of the breast of the fern-clad hill.

The moon was slowly rising over the dark range of Matawhaura as they left the further shore to return to Ohinemutu. The air was delicious, the lake a mirrored water-plain, across which the moonbeams showed silver-gleaming pathways, as if leading to other happy isles. The paddles of the Maori girls dipped softly into the placid water as the canoe stole silently across the lake's broad bosom.

"On such a night as this," said Massinger, "it would be most appropriate for you to tell, and for me to listen to, the legend of Hinemoa."

"It is a silly tale at best," answered Erena, with

a tone half of sadness, half of playfulness, in her voice—"a tale of woman's love and man's fidelity. They had better fortune in those old days."

"And, of course, nowadays," said Massinger, "there can be almost no love and less fidelity."

"The pakeha is wrong," said one of the girls, as they rested on their paddles, evidently anxious not to miss Erena's version of the legend (like that of Antar among the Arabs), ever new and deepening in interest with every generation—"the pakeha is wrong; girls' love is just the same as ever it was. It is always fresh, like the foliage of the *pohutu kawa*, with its beautiful red flowers. It does not fade and fall off, like the leaves of the trees the pakeha brought to the land."

"Hush, Torea!" said Erena; "you must not talk so to this pakeha. He is a great rangatira. And besides, you cannot know."

"Do I not?" answered the forest maiden. "If he is a rangatira, he will know too. But are you going to tell us the *Taihia?*"

"To stop your mouth, perhaps I had better; so I will begin. You must know that there was a young chief called Tutanekai, who resided with his family on this island of Mokoia. He was handsome and brave, but because of certain circumstances, and being a younger son, he was neither of high rank nor consideration in his tribe. He was, however, gifted in various ways, which made the young women of the tribe look favourably upon him. He was fond of music. On account of this, he and his friend Tiki constructed a stage or balcony on the slope of the hill there, which he called Kaiweka. There they used

to sit in the evenings, while Tutanekai played on a trumpet and his friend upon a flute, the soft notes of which were wafted across the lake to the village of O-whata, where dwelt Hinemoa.

"Now, Hinemoa was the most beautiful maiden in the tribe, and her reputation had travelled far. All the young men had paid court to her, but could get no mark or sign of favour. Among her admirers was Tutanekai, but he was not certain of his feelings being returned, and had not dared to pay her attention openly. So he used, lover-like, to breathe his woes into his melodious instrument; and night after night, as he and his friend sat on their balcony, the tender melancholy notes of the lover's trumpet floated over the lake, and were audible amid the sighs of the evening breeze and the plashing of the waves on the shore.

"After many moons, and when the summer was advanced, he found means to send a message to her by a woman of her *hapu*, to whom Hinemoa answered, 'Have we both, then, had such thoughts of each other?' And from that time she began to think daily of the love which had sprung up in her heart for Tutanekai, and to wander about by herself, and refuse food and company, after the manner of love-sick maidens. All her friends and relations began to say, 'What has happened to Hinemoa—she who was formerly so gay?' They also noticed that Tutanekai shunned the company of the young men, save only of his heart's brother, Tiki. Her feelings at length became so uncontrollable, that if there had been a canoe she would have paddled over to the point where her lover's trumpet, like the voice of the sea Atua

which none may disobey and live, seemed to draw her very heartstrings towards his abode on Mokoia. But her friends, thinking of this, had secured all the canoes.

"So it happened that on one warm night, when the moon was nearly full, she resolved in her heart what to do. She tied together six empty gourds to float around her, lest she might become faint before she reached the island, and softly slid into the lake near this very point, Wai-rerekai, which we are now approaching, and as often as she felt tired she floated with the help of the gourds. At last, when nearly exhausted, she reached the rock near the warm spring, which is still known by her name. Here she bathed and rested, also warmed herself, as she was trembling all over, partly from cold, and partly at the thought of meeting Tutanekai.

"While the maiden was thus warming herself in the hot spring, Tutanekai felt thirsty, and sent a slave to bring him water. So this slave went to the lake close to where Hinemoa was, and dipped in a calabash. The maiden, being frightened, called out to him in a gruff voice like a man's, 'Who is that water for?' He replied, 'It is for Tutanekai.' 'Give it to me, then,' said Hinemoa. Having finished drinking, she purposely threw down the calabash and broke it. The slave went back, and told Tutanekai that a man in the bath had broken it. This occurred more than once. Then Tutanekai in a rage went down to the bath, and searching about, caught hold of a hand. 'Who is this?' said he. 'It is I, Hinemoa.' So they were married, and lived happily," said Erena, concluding rather abruptly. "Oh, the next trouble

which occurred was that Tiki, the friend of Tutanekai's heart, grew ill and like to die because he had no wife, after being deprived of his friend and heart's brother. However, he was consoled with the hand of Tupe, the young sister of Tutanekai, and all was joy and peace."

At this happy ending the two Maori girls clapped their hands and shouted, "*Kapai, Kapai!*" till the lake-shore echoed again. Then dashing in their paddles, they rowed with such power and pace that they were soon landed at the legendary point of rock whence Hinemoa, love-guided, tempted the night, the darkness, and the unknown deeps.

* * * * * *

The allotted days passed all too quickly. They had wandered through the forest aisles and silent over-arching glades of Tikitapu; had stood on the saffron-hued flooring of Sulphur Point; had revelled in the life-renewing waters of the "Rachel" and the "Priest's" hot springs, whence all who bathe in faith issue cured of earthly ailments. The Oil Bath, the Blue Bath, the Spout Bath were successively tested, until, as it seemed to Massinger, he had acquired a new skin, almost a new soul and body, so exalted seemed every motion of sense and spirit.

At Whaka-rewa-rewa the great Pohutu Geyser, with its eruptive column of steam and water, nearly eighty feet in height, had been visited; also the grim and terrible Brain Pot, unknowing of the tragedy of which it was to be the scene, concluding with the dread and noisome Dantean valley redolent of the sights and sounds of the Inferno, even Tikitere.

But one more day remained, and the trio were

engaged in debate as to the manner in which it should be spent, so as to compress the greatest possible enjoyment into the "grudging hours," when a party of natives was observed to come through the fern-covered flat between Whaka-rewa-rewa and the lake, and at once proceed to the carved house. Here a number of the tribe, including the chief and certain elders, at once assembled.

"News of importance," said Warwick. "Something is in the wind; I must go over and see."

There was no doubting the fact that highly important intelligence had been received. The whole tribe was astir, and buzzing like a swarm of angry bees. When Warwick returned his face was grave and anxious.

"As I feared," he said. "The Governor has been obstinate in the wrong place; he would not give way in the case of the Waitara block. Blood has been shed. The Waikato tribes are massing their men, and threaten to attack Taranaki. *War is declared.* Outlying settlers have been killed. There is no going back now."

"This looks serious indeed," said Massinger, not, however, without a certain alertness of manner which showed that the romance of war was uppermost in his mind. "What is to be done? or where must we go?"

"It has come at last; I was certain that it would," said Erena. "What a terrible thing it is that men should be so foolish, so selfish! But we must do something, and not talk about it. I am for making across to Hokianga, and must go and prepare at once."

"Her idea is a good one," said Warwick, as the girl ran down to her end of the camp and called up her women. "We can get over to Horaki and go down the river by boat. The neighbourhood will be quiet as yet. We can trust the Ngapuhi, with Waka Nene to keep them steady, to be loyal to England. He never wavered in Heke's war, and is not likely to do so now. We must take leave of this chief, and get away without loss of time. But who comes now—with a following, too? This looks like a *taua*."

Here a fresh excitement arose, while shouts of "*Haere mai!*" and other words of welcome, more strongly emphasized than usual, denoted the arrival of a personage of importance. A comparatively large body of men, well armed, and superior to the ordinary natives of the district in height and warlike appearance, had come in sight. They marched regularly, and as they came up, all carrying muskets and cartridge-pouches, they presented a highly effective and martial appearance. Their leader was a white man.

At this moment Erena, who had been busied with her female attendants, reappeared. The moment she caught sight of the contingent she uttered a cry of joy, and, turning to Massinger, said—

"This is indeed most fortunate. We shall have no more trouble about routes. Yonder is my father. Let us go to meet him."

As she spoke Massinger noticed that the leader of the party, after a few words of greeting to the chief, had turned in their direction, and commenced to walk slowly towards them. As they approached

one another, Erena seemed anxious to explain to him the fact of her father's appearance at Rotorua at this particular time.

"He has, no doubt, had news of the likelihood of war, and has been to some portion of the tribe at a distance on some message for Waka Nene. He ranks as a war chief in the tribe since the old war, and has much influence."

By the time the explanation was concluded they were almost face to face, and Massinger was enabled to note the appearance and bearing of Allister Mannering, perhaps the most remarkable man among the by no means inconsiderable number of distinguished persons who from time to time had elected to cast in their lot with the children of Maui.

Massinger, in later years, always asserted that never in his whole life had he been so much impressed by the personality of any living man as by the remarkable individual who now stood before him. Tall beyond the ordinary stature of manhood, but of matchless symmetry, and moulded not less for activity than strength, there was a compelling air of command in his eye which every motion confirmed. His expression was grave and stern, but as he approached Erena, who ran to meet him, a wave of tenderness crossed his features like the ripple on a slumbering sea. Then he folded his daughter in his arms with every token of paternal fondness.

Whatever somewhat belated explanation of the position Massinger was arranging in his mind, was arrested by the meeting between father and child. After a short colloquy Mr. Mannering advanced, and

with perfect courtesy expressed his pleasure in welcoming him to Rotorua.

"I see that Erena has, with the help of Warwick here, done her part in showing you some of our wonders. Like her historic ancestress, she has a strong will of her own, but had I not the most thorough confidence in her prudence, as well as in the honour of an English gentleman, you will acknowledge that I might have cause for disapproval."

Here his steady, searching gaze was fixed full upon Massinger, who felt how poor a chance an unworthy adventurer would have, standing thus before him. But he met his accost frankly.

"I am indeed gratified to have met you, Mr. Mannering," he made answer. "I owe much of the charm of this month's travel and adventure to your daughter's companionship. It will be a lifelong memory, I assure you."

"You are neither of you to say any more about it," interposed Erena, with a playful air of command, hanging on her father's arm and menacing Massinger. "I am sure *I* enjoyed myself very much; so we are all pleased,—which ends that part of the story. But oh! father, is it true that the war has commenced? If so, what are we to do, and how is Mr. Massinger to get back to Auckland? I thought of going straight to Hokianga."

"Exactly what we are to do, not later than to-morrow morning. That is, I am going, you are going, also my *taua*, whose only prayer is to fall in with some of the Waikatos, not more than double their number, and have a good old-fashioned bloodthirsty battle. They are all men who have grown up since

Heke's war, and are spoiling for a fight. As for this gentleman's and Warwick's movements, they can settle them independently. I suggest that they avail themselves of my escort to Hokianga, whence they can easily find a passage to Auckland."

"Nothing could suit my purpose better," said Massinger. "I shall feel honoured by your company. Warwick will probably return with me."

Here the guide nodded assent.

"That is settled. You will find a hearty welcome from our chief, who has returned. I am proud to call him my earliest and best friend. So, as you are interested in Maori life and customs, you will never have a better opportunity of studying them under their natural conditions—I mean in time of war."

"In the land and the people I take an interest so deep that it will fade only with my life. Deeds, however, are more in my line, and by them I trust to be judged."

"There is a time coming for all of us," said Mr. Mannering, gravely, "when the valour and wisdom of both races will be put to the test. I have no doubt of the first. I only hope that the second may not be found wanting in the day of trial. And now, if you will excuse me, I must go back and hold diplomatic palaver with Hiki-aro, the chief here, and his most potent, grave, and reverend seigneurs. My men will be off duty, and will amuse themselves with games —most probably a war-dance, which you may like to see."

"I have seen one already in Auckland, but I will look on."

"And I will *not*," said Erena. "It is an abominable

heathen custom, making these ignorant natives worse than they are, and recalling the bad old times which every one should be ashamed to speak about. I shall pack up and get ready for an early start."

"You won't change 'Tangata Maori' just yet, my dear Erena," said Mannering. "This war will throw him back a few years. But I agree with you that these old customs should be suffered to die out, and as we shall have ample time to discuss the war on the road home, I will reserve mention of it till to-morrow."

So saying, he departed to his *taua*, who, not until he dismissed them, piled their muskets, over which, in despite of their friendly relations with Rotorua, they set an adequate guard. They were soon observed to join their compatriots in a copious and hospitable meal provided by the women of the tribe.

"How relieved I am!" said Warwick, when father and daughter had departed on their respective errands. "Nothing could have been more fortunate than meeting Mr. Mannering here. Even in travelling to Hokianga, a friendly route, we might have met a skirmishing *taua* like his own, and, in spite of Waka Nene's passport, would have stood but little show of escaping. Maori blood has been shed, as well as white, and any murder of stray Europeans or hostile natives would be justifiable, according to inter-tribal law."

"Then we are safe as far as Hokianga?"

"I should say perfectly so. Mr. Mannering is a tower of strength; no single *taua* dares tackle his. His bodyguard are picked men, known to be equal

to almost double their number. Then, of course, he has the whole Ngapuhi tribe, five thousand strong, at his back."

"And when we get to this Hokianga, as it is called? Is it a township?"

"It's a noble river, miles wide near the sea, with towns and villages on it. In the grand forests of Kauri Totara and other pine woods within reach, a great timber trade has flourished for many years past. Sailing-vessels ply between Horaki, Rawini, and Auckland, so there will be no difficulty in getting back."

The ceremonies proper to leave-taking having been transacted, the reinforced party set out for the Hokianga, through what are mostly described as pathless woods interspersed with morasses.

When the march was less difficult, and there was leisure for conversation, Mannering beguiled the way with tales and reminiscences which caused Massinger to wonder unceasingly that a man so variously gifted, possessed of such social charm, so wide an experience of men and books, should have elected to wear out his life amid a barbaric race. "Doubtless," thought he, "this man belongs to the true Viking breed, a born leader of men, impatient of the restraints of civilization, not to be contented without the quickening presence of danger, 'the dust of desperate battle,' the savour of blood, even. Such men have always been thrown off, from time to time, by our sea-roving race; have nobly done their parts in subduing for the empire the waste places of the earth. His hair is tinged with grey, but how springy his long elastic strides, how youthful are all his movements, how joyous his laugh,

how keen his sense of humour! An *Anax andrōn*—a king of men, without doubt. No wonder that his daughter should have inherited, along with her glorious physical perfection, which she owes in part to her mother's race, the higher intelligence and lofty ideals which ennoble 'the heirs of all the ages, and the foremost files of Time!'"

CHAPTER IX

"YOU can inform me, then," said Massinger, "as to the exact manner in which the war commenced."

"I fancy I can. This Waitara block which you have heard about has been the *causa belli*, in every sense of the word. The Governor, egged on by the Provincial Council of Auckland and the land-buying party in the General Assembly, at length consented to purchase it from Teira."

"I was told in Auckland that the Governor said if a satisfactory title could be given, he would accept the offer which Teira made. That seemed fair enough."

"Nothing less so. First of all, because Teira knew —no one better—that no living native had a right to sell an area of tribal land. There are always scores of claimants to such blocks, the consent of all of whom was necessary. And after and above all this, Te Rangitake, as the Ariki (High Priest and spiritual head) of the tribe, had an unquestioned right to forbid the sale."

"How, then, did Teira come to sell the land?"

"Because he was certain of payment of so much ready money down, and had an old grudge against

Te Rangitake. With the Government behind him, he argued, they would be able to force through the bargain. He either did not count on the stubborn resistance of the tribe, or, more likely, did not care.

"He seems to have acted treacherously to his own people and dishonestly towards us."

"Precisely. But no people on earth are more reckless of consequences than these. Still, Colonel Browne was distinctly wrong in accepting a disputed title. His former opinion, from which he unluckily receded, was (as he wrote to Lord Caernarvon), 'That the immediate consequences of any attempt to acquire Maori lands without previously extinguishing the native title to the satisfaction of all having an interest in them would be a universal outbreak, in which many innocent Europeans would perish, and colonization be indefinitely retarded.' Of course, the Europeans coveted these lands, and were determined to get them by hook or by crook."

"Then what would you have advised?"

"The mischief is done now. The rebellion must be put down or the tribes pacified. No easy task, as you will see. Still, a public trial and full examination of the title of Teira would have satisfied Rangitake and the tribes. Teira's title was *bad*, as every Maori in the island knows, and every Englishman must confess, who is not interested in land or politics."

"But a war would have been certain to come at some time between the races."

"Possibly; but it should not have been entered upon to bolster up a wrong and an injustice."

"Will it spread, do you think?"

"I fully believe that it will. The Waikatos will join, unless I am misinformed—a powerful tribe, well armed, and with numbers of young men who have not been able to indulge in tribal fighting lately, and are naturally eager for battle."

"Are they, then, so devoted to war? This tribe has been exceptionally prosperous, I have heard."

"All the more reason. They have 'waxed fat,' etc., and long to try conclusions with the white man. As for liking war as an amusement, read the record of the last century. It is one long list of stubborn and bloody engagements—wars for conquest; wars in satisfaction of long-past feuds; wars in defence; wars of aggression; wars for ill-timed pleasantries; for all conceivable reasons; last, not least, for no reason at all. Of the Maoris it may be said most truly, as Sir Walter Scott of the borderer—

> 'Let nobles fight for fame;
> Let vassals follow where they lead.
> Burghers, to guard their townships bleed;
> But *war's* the Borderer's game.'

So most truly is it the Maori's. Next to the chance of killing his enemy, the chance of being killed himself is the most delightful excitement known to him. So, you may judge that a force of this character, used to gliding through woods like these, unhampered by clothing, yet well armed, must be a dangerous foe."

"So I should think," said Massinger. "And if these Waikatos join the Ngatiawa and other tribes, they will have a considerable force? What, for

instance, is about the number of adult whites in this North Island?"

"In 1849 about six thousand, including nearly half as many soldiers; and of natives, say one hundred and five thousand."

"Then if they choose to combine, they could drive us into the sea."

"If a really well-organized attack by the whole Maori nation was made before the Government could get help from abroad, the whites would be something in the same position as they were in Hayti when the negroes revolted. But it will never come off."

"Why should it not?"

"Because, as in the Great Indian Mutiny, the tribes are divided. Some of the older chiefs, men of ability and forecast, have always been true to the whites, and will remain so—Waka Nene and Patuone, with others. Their tribes are powerful, and are, like most savage races, ready to join the whites against their hereditary enemies—such, by many a bitter blood-feud, that time has not weakened."

"I understood from your daughter—you will pardon me for referring to it—that you had personally assisted the British Government in the time of Heke's rebellion."

"Yes; I was the first and only white man who raised men, and held him and his force in check after he had sacked and burned the town of Kororariku. We were fighting almost every day for a month till the troops arrived. When I proposed to the chief, Waka Nene, to oppose Heke, he said he had not men enough, but that if I would join him with all I could raise, he would turn out. I saw that the fate

of the North depended on my answer; Heke was then on the march to Hokianga. I agreed. In twenty-four hours I had joined the chief, with twice as many men as he had, and, as I said before, we found the enemy in full employment till the troops came."

"What a glorious opportunity! And yet it is not every one who could have taken prompt advantage of it. I should have been delighted to have been in it."

Mannering looked with approval at the animated countenance of the speaker as he said—

"Waka Nene and I would have been only too glad to recruit you and a few more of the same stamp. It was very good fun while it lasted. My friend Waterton came on as soon as he could get across from Hokianga, and was in the thick of it. His right-hand man was shot dead within a foot of him."

* * * * * *

Though ordinarily reserved, Massinger, when abroad, made a point of conversing with strangers of all callings and both sexes, in an unstudied fashion, which often produced unexpected gains.

He was wont to tell himself that this careless comradeship was like turning over the leaves of a new book. For is not the mind of any human creature, could one but catch sight of certain cabalistic characters, traced deep in the tablets of the inner soul, more exciting, more amazing, more comic, more terrible, more instructive than any book that ever left printer's hands? Yet never, at home or abroad, had he encountered a companion like to this one. A wonderful admixture of the heroic and social attributes! The reckless courage of a Berserker;

the air of born command which showed itself in every instinctive motion; the love of danger for its own sake, as yet unslaked by time, by dangerous adventures over land and sea; the iron constitution which could endure, even enjoy, the privations of savage life, joined to an intellect of the highest order; speculative, daring, fully instructed in the latest results of science and sociology, yet capable of presenting every subject upon which he touched in a new and original light; while around the most grave issues and important questions played a vein of humour, comic or cynical, but irresistibly attractive.

Massinger had heard of such personages, but had assuredly never met one in the flesh before. What might such a man not have become, with the favouring conditions which encircle some men's lives? A great general, an admiral, for he was equally at home on land or sea; a prime minister; an explorer; a pastoral magnate in the wide areas and desolate waste kingdoms of Australia, where a thousand square miles wave with luxuriant vegetation during one year, and in the second following are dust and ashes! To any eminence in the wide realms of Greater Britain might he not have ascended, surrounded by staunch friends and devoted admirers, had he chosen to select a career and follow it up with the unflinching determination for which he was proverbial! And, thought this Englishman, what had he done? what was he? A leader of men, certainly—a chief in a savage tribe in a scarce known island, at the very end of the world, content to live and die far from the centres of civilization, the home of his race, the refinements of art, and intellectual

contact with his peers. What an existence, what an end, for one who had doubtless started in life with high hopes of success and distinction in the full acceptation of the word, of honourable command and acknowledged eminence!

And what had been the clog upon the wheel, the fateful temptation, the enthralling lure potent to sway so strong, so swift a champion from the path sacred to his race, leaving him towards the close of life among shallows and quicksands? What, indeed? mused he, looking up. And, even as he turned, Erena, fresh from an exploration to the fords of a flooded stream which barred their path, presented a living answer to the query. As she stood in the uncertain light which struggled through the forest glades, her eyes bright with triumph and her form transfigured with the momentary gleam of the sun-rays, he could have imagined her a naiad of old Arcadian days, prompt to warn the hero of the approach of danger. Such must have been her mother in the springtime of her beauty, in the year when her father, a youthful Ulysses, appeared as a god newly arisen from the sea before the Nausicaa of the tribe. It was not given to man to resist the o'ermastering spell of such a maiden's love. "The oracle has spoken," he thought. "Is it a warning, or the knell of fate?"

"I have found the bridge," she said, her clear tones ringing out through the silent woods, joyous with girlish triumph. "It was made in the old wars, but is still strong. Westward lies the Hokianga."

She led the way by a well-worn path which turned at an angle from the ordinary track.

"Here is the bridge!" she said at length, pausing at the bank of a rushing stream, which, swollen by rain in the mountain ranges, had in twenty-four hours risen many feet above the ordinary ford. "It is old, as you can see, but strong and unbroken still. Over this passed the great tribe of the Ngatimaru when they were fleeing with their women and children in Hougi's time. I could almost fancy that I see traces of blood on these great beams still. But it will serve us as well as it served them. And now we have but to cross these wooded hills and we are at Marunoki, my father's home. I welcome you to it in advance."

Here they were joined by Mr. Mannering and Warwick, who had been talking earnestly for some time, probably about the war, and the more pressing and now inevitable consequences.

"I could wish that you had made your appearance last year," said the former, "when I could have acted as cicerone with leisure and effect. After being a foe to hurry and bustle all my life, I think it most unkind of fate to let me in for what I plainly foresee will be a period of disturbance most unsatisfactory to all concerned."

"There is nothing which I should have enjoyed so much," replied Massinger; "but you will agree with me that this is no time for *dilettante* work. I shall always be thankful for the experience I have had so far, with its unfading memories."

"And may I ask what you propose to do when you reach Auckland?"

"They were talking of raising a volunteer corps when I left, and——"

"They have already raised one," interposed Mannering. "More than that, the militia have been called out, and proclamation of martial law made. Te Rangitake's pah was burnt on the 6th; the boundaries of the Waitara block were surveyed the week after under military protection. Te Rangitake built another pah on the disputed land, and pulled up the surveyors' pegs. On the 17th, Colonel Gold attacked the pah with howitzers, after sending a note by Parris, which the Maoris refused to read. They returned fire, and wounded three men. Next morning a breach was made, by which the troops entered, to find the pah empty. They were two days destroying a fortification put up in one night, and garrisoned by seventy Maoris!"

"A bad start, surely?"

"Yes, as tending to give the tribes confidence in their ability to fight white troops—a dangerous lesson, as the Governor and his advisers will find out."

"Has further fighting followed?"

"Unfortunately, yes. Two pahs have been built at Omata, and three settlers killed south of Taranaki. Te Rangitaka, to do him justice, warned his men not to make war on unarmed people. A combined force of militia volunteers, soldiers, and sailors stormed the pah at Omatu. So it is a very pretty quarrel as it stands."

"You have heard this 'from a sure hand,' as they used to say before post-offices were invented?"

"My tidings are only too true, I am sorry to say. And, in spite of the success of the troops, my opinion is that the war has only commenced. If the Waikato tribes join, others will be drawn in. It will take years

to subdue them thoroughly—years of vast expenditure of blood and treasure."

"Speaking from your experience of both sides, what would you suggest as an alternative policy?"

"Withdrawing from Waitara promptly. Justice would be done, and a lasting peace might be secured. The Maoris are now the Queen's subjects, and should be treated as such. Just now each side has secured a temporary advantage. With a consistent and impartial policy, disaffection would cease. By-and-by the natives will sell their land readily enough; with a minimum price established by the Crown and proper titles decided by a Land Court, all things would find their level. No one will object except land speculators and their allies."

"Would not the Government act even now upon your representations?"

"Hardly. I am afraid that I am in the position of Wisdom crying in the streets. But, to quit 'the arts of war and peace,' wildly exciting as the subject is becoming, here is Maru-noki, our lodge in the wilderness, to which I beg to welcome you heartily."

They had been pursuing a winding woodland path, which at last conducted them to an eminence below which the view, opening out, disclosed a noble river. Immediately below where they stood, and near a rude but massive wharf, was a cottage, built bungalow-fashion, with broad verandahs, surrounded by a palisaded garden, and shaded by those typically British trees, the "oak, the ash, and the bonny elm tree." Leafy memorials of the fatherland, they are rarely absent from the humblest cottage, the lordliest mansion, in Britain's colonies, and in none do they

flourish more luxuriantly than in these isles of the farthest South.

The present home of the Hokianga tribe was on the lower levels, which, since the cessation of the chronic warfare which desolated each district from time to time, they had adopted as more convenient. None the less, however, on a lofty hill-top within easy reach was the primeval fortress, to which for generations they had been wont nightly to repair for security, and from which issued to their daily duties the long trains of chiefs, warriors, women, and slaves. On the opposite bank of the river were low hills and dunes of drifted sand, while to the eastward rose two promontories, cloud-like in the misty azure, between which rose and fell the tides of the unbounded main.

Warwick and Erena had gone forward to the cottage, whence a hospitable smoke presently ascended. Willing handmaids from the kainga were also in evidence. No time was wasted. The keen air, the day's march, all tended to superior appetites. In half an hour after Massinger had been refreshed with a glass of excellent Hollands, and inducted into a bedroom, furnished chiefly with books, he found himself in the dining-room before a luncheon-table exceedingly well appointed. The fish and game, with vegetables and corned pork, were truly excellent. The bread was extemporized, but, in the shape of hot griddle cakes, was only too appetizing. Tea, of course, concluded the repast, than which, Massinger confessed, he never remembered enjoying one more heartily.

"In an hour or so," said Mr. Mannering, "we will stroll down to the kainga. The head chief of our

tribe, the celebrated Waka Nene, whom you met on your way over to the Terraces, has returned. You will hear what he says on the present state of things. No man in the island can speak with more knowledge or authority. Warwick and I have a few arrangements to make; meanwhile I dare say you can find something to interest you among my old books. Erena will keep you company till I return."

Massinger found ample *pabulum mentis* among the varied collection of books and papers, which not only filled the shelves around three sides of the room, but won place on the mantelpiece, the window-sills, and, indeed, on the floor. Old colonial works of the earliest days of New Zealand, Tasmania, and Australia, the worn binding of which denoted their archaic value, jostled the latest scientific treatises or recently issued biographies and travels, besides magazines and illustrated papers up to date.

"Here," thought he, "is another factor in the so-called solitary, self-exiled life of this truly remarkable man—'never less lonely than when alone,' with these companions of every age and all time at his elbow. What a delicious place to read in! I can fancy him on this couch, with his pipe and a favourite author, when the day is declining, or beneath those o'ershadowing ferns on the hillside, spending hours in a state of absolute beatitude. The open window 'gives' on the broad river, 'strong without rage, without o'erflowing full,' an occasional sail fleeting by like a returning sea-bird. Canoes are racing home after a day's fishing, the girls paddling for their lives, and encouraging one another in the mimic contest with laughing reproaches and warlike cries. The *dolce*

far niente period to be succeeded by a pedestrian expedition at the head of his faithful retainers, or a yacht voyage to Auckland, where congenial companionship at the Club and the news of the civilized world await him. How peacefully, how happily, might life flow on under such conditions! How long might slow o'ertaking age defer his approach! The only thing wanting to complete this ideal existence, for a man of his temperament, is the excitement of war; and this he is about to have."

The catalogue of pleasures open to a quasi-hermit of such various tastes and accomplishments was interrupted by the entrance of Erena, who had apparently completed her household arrangements, and was minded to add the charms of her society to his mental indulgences.

"It is easy to see that I have been away," she said. "When the fit takes him, my father surrounds himself with books, which he never puts back, and reads day and night for weeks together. He is absent-minded, and careless of the proprieties to a wonderful degree, so that I have a month's work generally in putting him and the household to rights when I return from a visit or an excursion."

"And do you often go so far from home as when I met you first?" he said. "I suppose you are not afraid?"

"Afraid?" she said, with a look of surprise and scorn. "Of what, or of whom? In time of peace who is there to harm me? When you saw me I had been to see a cousin. She sometimes comes here to stay with me."

"I am sorry not to have met her. Why didn't

you introduce me? Is she of the same charming complexion as yourself—that clear brunette tint which I admire so much?"

The girl laughed merrily. "Do you indeed? The truth is, she was rather shy. She is a 'full Maori,' as we say, though she talks good English, and is thought very good-looking. I would have brought her up, but she went away the morning after. Her family sent for her in a hurry. But I see my father coming up to take you to the chief, Waka Nene."

"The great chief of whom I have heard so much; I hardly noticed him before. Now tell me about him. What is his general disposition?"

"He is a man who would have made a great field-marshal in any other country. Very calm—generally, that is—looking always to the future; slow in making up his mind, never changing it afterwards. He decided many years ago that the religion of England and her laws were those for him and his tribe to adopt, and in war or peace he has never swerved from that policy."

"You said something about his being calm nearly always? Is he sometimes the contrary?"

"He is usually most dignified; but he can be terrible when really aroused. It is an old story now, but he once shot a native dead before his own friends and relations because he had helped to kill a white man treacherously."

"Indeed, that was judicial severity in earnest. How did it come about?"

"In this way. The natives at Whakatane first of all 'cut out' and burned a vessel called the *Haws*, or *Haweis*, killing part of the crew. They were headed by a chief called Ngarara, or 'the reptile'—

not so very unlike his namesake, our friend. He, however, was shot by a Ngapuhi chief from the deck of the *New Zealander*, a vessel sent from the Bay of Islands, to make an example of him. The tribe went to Hicks Bay, and, taking the pah there, at Whare-kahika, captured two Europeans; one they killed, the other was rescued by a passing ship. A Ngapuhi native took part in the murder; he was then visiting at Whakatane, but lived with his wife at Tauranga. Waka Nene was on the beach at Maunga-tapu when this native returned. He advanced towards him and delivered a speech, *taki*-ing, or pacing up and down, Maori-fashion, while the other natives sat around. 'Oh,' he said, 'you're a pretty fellow to call yourself a Ngapuhi! Do they murder pakehas in that manner? What makes you steal away to kill pakehas? Had the pakeha done you any harm, that you killed him? There! that is for your work," he said, as he suddenly stopped short and shot the native dead, in the midst of his friends. It was bold and rash, but all New Zealand knew him then and long after as the friend of the pakehas."

"That was true Jedwood justice, which used to be described as 'hang first and try afterwards,' but from his point of view it was the just vengeance of the law."

"It seemed cruel," said Erena, who had told with flashing eye and heightened colour this tale of the "wrath of a king." "But little was thought of the poor white man killed by a stranger to the tribe for an act with which he had nothing to do, and perhaps had never heard of. What the Ngapuhi suffered for was, that if he had belonged to Ngarara's tribe his act

would have been justified, as *utu* (proper vengeance). It was for mixing himself up with the blood-feud of another tribe that Waka Nene killed him; and his people saw the justice of it, and did not interfere."

Mr. Mannering, arriving at the end of the story, announced two facts, one of which was that the chief would be ready to receive them in half an hour; the other, that a timber-laden schooner would leave the wharf on the following afternoon, and no doubt would be happy to give Mr. Massinger and Warwick a passage to Auckland.

"Of course, we should be too happy to put you up for as long as you cared to stay with us; but, from what I hear, things are going from bad to worse at Taranaki. The natives have scored what they consider a success so far, and are confident that they can hold their own against the regulars. More troops have been sent for, also artillery. Nothing less than a campaign will satisfy either side now."

"If it were an ordinary time nothing would give me greater pleasure, I can say most sincerely," said Massinger. "I could fish and sail, ride and walk, and even take a turn at that mysterious industry of gum-digging, of which I hear exciting reports. But as things are, I feel in honour bound to report myself at headquarters. I am not wholly inexperienced in military matters, if a yeomanry captain's commission counts for anything."

"You will find that it has a solid value at present," said Mannering. "The colonists are so keen, that any one who has ever heard a bugle-call is looked upon as a veteran."

"Indeed, yes," laughed Erena. "We shall look in

the papers for what happens when Major Massinger goes to the front. Only, remember our bush rambles, and don't despise the poor natives because they have no uniform. Keep a good look-out among the tree-ferns and the manuka; there will be the danger."

Upon which Erena, who seemed quite as much inclined for tears as for laughter, retreated to her own dominions.

* * * * * *

The great chief of the Ngapuhi stood near the carved porch of the *whare-puni*, surrounded by the elders of the tribe. He was dressed in his garments of ceremony, having a fine flaxen mat, worn toga-fashion, across his breast. In his hair were the rare feathers of the beautiful *huia* which none save a chief may wear. His staff was in his hand, which he shifted to the left as he extended his right hand in friendly greeting to the pakeha.

"My word to you is again welcome," he said, fixing his calm, inexpressive, but steadfast eyes upon the young man's face. "My pakeha friend Mannering tells me that you depart to Waitemata. It is well. My heart is sore because of the foolishness of the Mata Kawana. The *runanga* of the pakeha also is obdurate."

"The war has begun," said Mannering. "It seems a small matter, but this land at Waitara will be dearly bought."

"A little fire will burn the forest when the fern is dry," replied the chief, gravely. "Money was given to Teira for Waitara, but blood must be paid. The chain of the surveyor is now red."

"Will not Te Rangitake listen to Wiremu Thompson

and to Tamati Ngapora?" said Mr. Mannering. "Their word is not for war. Trade is better than fighting, better than too much land."

"He would listen, perhaps, but the people of the tribe will not. Then there is the King business to bring more trouble. If the Waikato join the Ngatihaua, it will be such a war as we have not seen yet."

"And the Ngapuhi?" asked Massinger, almost wondering at his own temerity.

"The Ngapuhi," replied the chief, with stately dignity, "fought for the English through the war of Honi-Heke; they fought with the Rarawas against the Ngati maniapoto and the Waikato. They will do so now. You have the writing of Waka Nene?"

He produced the paper.

A grave smile overspread the tattooed countenance as he spoke rapidly for some minutes in the native tongue to Mr. Mannering, who replied in the same language; then, saluting both in a farewell manner, he departed towards the spot where a concourse of natives of both sexes stood or sat amid the whares of the kainga.

"What did he say to you?" inquired Massinger. "Did it relate to me in any way?"

"Yes; it was only that it would be a good thing for you to keep that bit of paper. No one could tell now what was going to happen. He thought it well that you should leave in the timber vessel. I am of the same opinion, or we should not let you go just yet, I promise you."

Then they strolled homewards. The declining sun was lighting up the green meadows, in which

women were working in the kumera patches ; the broad reach of the river, on which canoes were gliding smoothly in the half light ; the grim pah, with its palisades and trenches, looking down upon the peaceful scene which, to all appearance, was fixed in Arcadian serenity. Was it fated to resound with the war-cries of hostile tribes in the coming campaign ? Was the tomahawk, the club, the musket, of a ruthless foe to work war's worst horrors upon this simple industrious community of nature's children ?

The evening which Massinger spent at this "kingdom by the sea" would always, he told himself, be marked with a white stone in his calendar. Nothing could have exceeded the geniality of the atmosphere. The dinner was excellent of its kind, while the saddle of home-grown, black-faced mutton, precursor of the astounding shipments which have afforded of late years such cheap and plentiful repasts to the British working man, reminded the ex-squire of his home flock. Mr. Mannering produced claret of a choice vintage, the finest which the guest had met with in New Zealand. Tales of wild life and strange company were contributed by the host and Warwick, replete with thrilling interest, as hair-breadth escapes or hand-to-hand fights were described. Erena's gay laugh or sportive disclaimer were not wanting, while Massinger took care to play the part of a discreet listener, less anxious to speak than to absorb the rare and unfamiliar knowledge which only such men as Mannering and their guide were capable of imparting.

It was arranged that in the following morning Erena should accompany him to the pah which the stranger was most anxious to see—the far-famed tribal

fortress, the unconquered Whiria, which every traveller since the days of Cook had lauded for its exhibition of engineering skill.

"You will have full time," said Mr. Mannering, "as the schooner does not leave until late in the afternoon, and will probably anchor at Rawene to take in Kauri gum. If so, I trust you will be able to make acquaintance with my old friend and comrade, Waterton, who is the King of the Lower Hokianga. I will say nothing more than that you will find him 'a picked man of countries,' and as such, with other qualities, a very treasure-house of knowledge. He has not so long returned from an extended European tour, so that he is well up to date in the old world and the new."

Our hero thought to himself that surely no other country contained so many notable personages, rich in the courtier's, scholar's, soldier's eye, tongue, sword, as this astonishing island, in which the human marvels were not less numerous and unique than those of nature. But he said merely that he trusted in his luck to provide him with a head wind, in which case he would be delighted to avail himself of Mr. Waterton's hospitality.

"It is such a pretty house, and quite a wonderful garden," chimed in Erena. "I think they have every tree in Australia there, besides our poor ratas and karakas. However, you will see for yourself; only don't tell the Miss Watertons what a pilgrimage we have done together, or there will be murder next time we meet."

"I shall be most discreet, I assure you; but I am afraid I shall break down in the cross-examination. What a pity you will not be there to defend me!"

"I should like to go very much; but there will be no more visiting for me for some time to come, unless the tribe moves away. But if we can't tell what is before us in time of peace, in war it will be even more uncertain. And now I must say good-night if we are to walk to the pah to-morrow, and the track is chiefly uphill."

Warwick strolled down to the village, bent upon ascertaining the popular feeling on the subject of the war, and Mannering, having lighted his pipe and opened a fresh bottle of claret, invited his guest to take the comfortable armchair on the opposite side of the glowing wood fire, and "launched out into a wide sea of reasoning eloquence."

His guest was not anxious to retire early, though having a fair amount of exercise to his credit. He was one of those lucky people who are capable of deferring sleep to a more convenient season if any specially exciting affair be on hand. Reflecting that he might never have the opportunity of enjoying such another symposium, or meeting so many-sided an entertainer, he resigned himself frankly to the occasion. The bottle of claret was finished, and perhaps another or two opened, the second of the small hours was near its close, when the *séance* was concluded, and Massinger retired for the night, well pleased with himself as having had good value for a protracted *sederunt*.

Hour after hour had he listened to the charmed converse of this extraordinary personage. Much had he seen, much read, deeply thought, in solitude revolving the social and scientific problems of all ages, bending a vigorous and original mind to the solution of the

dread mysteries of life and death, with much solemn questioning of the Sphinx regarding the Here and the Hereafter. He could imagine him travelling onward through the dread solitudes of the Antarctic pole, sledge-borne, like the creation of Frankenstein, or turbaned and robed as an Arab, urging a camel through the arid wastes of the Western deserts. Of all inhabited lands south of the equator, his knowledge was complete and accurate, and in every clime or condition of life the guest could well believe that the analytical, all-comprehensive, unresting intelligence was testing scientific results or garnering knowledge. And yet, *Cui bono?* What contributions to the use and enjoyment of mankind could such a protagonist, in every contest between man and nature, have furnished? Would he bequeath such a treasure to posterity, or would his wisdom die with him?

CHAPTER X

A FEW hours of soundest sleep sufficed for the guest's present needs. Looking through his casement, he beheld the sun just clearing the tops of the pines ere he summoned this secluded world to its occupations. Early as was the hour, Mannering was already dressed, and strolling through the garden with his matutinal pipe. The kainga was alive and busy ; women hurrying to and fro, preparing the food for the day ; children clustering around in expectation ; the young people bathing in the river or launching their canoes. The hovering flock of sea-birds showed where a shoal of *kakahai*, at which they dashed from time to time, ruffled the surface of the water or leaped above it. All nature was responding to the day-god's summons, as a warmer glow suffused the sky and tipped the crown of the frowning dark-hued pah with gold. Massinger betook himself to the jetty at the foot of the garden, and, plunging into the clear cool depths, felt refreshed and strengthened for whatever the coming day might provide, returning after a lengthened swim just in time to dress for breakfast.

"I thought that you and my father would never leave off talking last night," said Erena, as she came

into the hall, looking as fresh as the morn, which she not inappropriately typified. "You did not disturb me, for I slept soundly for hours, and when I awoke, thinking it was near morning, I heard your voices, or rather my father's."

"I am not certain that I should have gone to bed at all if he had not suggested it," said Massinger. "I never had such a glorious night."

"I am glad to hear you say so. It is such a treat to him to have a visit from any one who knows about books and the world, that he cannot find it in his heart to leave off. When Mr. Waterton pays us a visit, they talk all day and all night nearly."

"What is that you're saying?" called out the man referred to from the garden. "Who is taking away my character? I have no better answer than a paraphrase of Charles Lamb's: 'If I go to bed late, I always get up early.' There will be plenty of time to sleep when there is nothing better to do; that is, if Te Rangitake and his Waikato friends will let us enjoy ourselves in our own way, which I begin to doubt. In the mean time, let us take short views of life. So you two young people are going to look at the pah?"

"With your permission. I should like to examine it well. The knowledge may come in useful by-and-by. Who knows? When was the last attack made upon it?"

"Twice in Heke's war, more than twenty years ago. I was younger then, and had the honour of being one of the defence force. We beat off the besiegers with loss."

"I suppose firearms were used?"

"Certainly. Every tribe was well provided at that time. They bought them dearly, too, as the chiefs compelled them to work so fearfully hard at the flax-dressing—*Phormium tenax* being the purchase-money for muskets—that many died of the unhealthy conditions, marshy levels, and crowded whares in which they lived. However, there was nothing else for it. The tribe which first became armed proceeded at once to crush its nearest neighbour or enemy, as the case might be."

"So it was a case of life and death?"

"Nothing short of it," said Mannering. "The first use which Hongi Ika made of his civilizing visit to England, where he 'stood before kings,' was to grasp the immense significance of the gunpowder invention, and make bad resolutions, to be carried out when he should return to his own country. With characteristic Maori reticence, he kept his own counsel when staying with the worthy pioneer missionary, Marsden, at his house in Parramatta, where Admiral King often met him, and was much struck with his dignified and aristocratic carriage. By the way, it was the admiral's father, Governor King, who took the trouble to return to their own country two deported Maoris from Norfolk Island, where they were languishing in exile, having been carried there with some idea of teaching the art of flax-dressing. This, of course, they could not do."

"Why? Did they not know?"

"Of course not. They were chiefs, and as such incapable of menial labour."

The weather being favourable to the expedition to the pah, Roland Massinger and his fair guide set

out with that sanguine expectation of pleasure which the exploration of the unknown in congenial company excites in early youth. The path lay across the cultivated plots of the tribe, where he noticed the neatness and freedom from weeds which everywhere prevailed. The plantations were chiefly on an alluvial flat, through which a creek ran its winding course. It had been swollen by recent rains, so, encountering a small party of women and children carrying baskets, Erena inquired in the vernacular as to the best place to cross. A pleasant-looking woman asked, apparently, who the pakeha was, and after receiving Erena's reply, in which Massinger detected the word "rangatira," laughed as she made a jesting reply, and volunteered to guide them. This she did by leading the way to the side of a boundary fence; from this she extemporized a bridge, which, though narrow, answered the purpose. The pakeha gave a shilling to a bright-eyed elf running beside her, the sudden lighting up of whose face told that the value of coin of the realm was not unknown even in this Arcadian spot.

"What did the woman say?" he asked, as they went on their way towards the steep ascent.

The girl's eyes sparkled with merriment, as she replied—

"She wished to know who you were, and when I said a pakeha rangatira, her reply was, 'Oh, quite true; he looks like one.' They are keen observers, you see, and very conservative. It would astonish you to see how quickly they find out the different rank and standing of the white people they meet."

"They have no modern craze for equality or socialistic rule?"

"None whatever. A chief is born to his exalted rank, which is undisputed. At the same time, he must keep up to a certain standard in war or peace, otherwise his *mana*, his general reputation and influence, would suffer."

"And a slave?" inquired he.

"Oh, a slave is forced to work at the pleasure of his owner, and may be killed for any reason or none at all. So also the common people of the tribe must obey the chiefs, more particularly in war, though, like those of other nations, they can make their voices heard at critical times."

"And the women?" queried Massinger.

"Oh, the women!" said Erena, while a graver expression overspread her face. "I am afraid that they have to work hard, and are not so much considered as they might be. They do most of the cultivation, mat-making, cooking, and general household duties, particularly when grown old. The younger ones have a better time of it."

"So they have everywhere. It is the prerogative of the sex. It only shows that human nature is much the same everywhere, and that all societies differ less in the essentials of life than is generally supposed."

Having skirted the river-shore, a part of which was of the nature of quicksand, and so needed a guide to the manner born, they began to ascend the slope of the volcanic hill, which, as throughout the North Island, had been selected for the tribal castrum. After a lengthened climb, which would have tested the powers of less practised pedestrians, they stood upon the wind-swept summit, artificially levelled, and

through the heavy sliding gates entered the ancient fortress. Before doing so they had to cross trenches, to scale embankments, and had time to note the various strategic preparations which, though crumbling or partially dismantled, exhibited the skill with which they had been constructed. The water-supply, as in most of the "castles" of the period, was the weak point, the besieged having to steal out in the night at the peril of their lives to procure the indispensable element.

"What a glorious view!" exclaimed he, as, side by side, they looked on the wide expanse of land and sea which lay beneath and around them—the broad estuary, the broken and fantastic outlines of the mountain range beyond the river-bank.

The surf was breaking on the bar between the heads of the Hokianga, while southward lay the valley, studded with the whares of the kainga and the garden-like plots of the kumera fields. Almost unchanged was the scene since the rude warrior, standing on stages behind these palisades, launched his spear at the foe, or, wounded in the assault, looked his last upon mountain and valley, sea and shore, but died shouting defiance.

"What a strange thing is this life of ours!" said Massinger, musingly. "It is less than a year since I was living contentedly in an English county, on an estate which my forefathers had held for centuries. I had then no more idea of quitting England than I have of setting out for the planet Mars."

"And do you not regret the leaving such a paradise as England is said to be, when one is born to wealth and honour?"

"I cannot say that I do. So far from it, that I

consider I have made a distinct advance in knowledge and development. My life then was narrow and monotonous, leading to nothing save contentment with a round of provincial duties."

"But travel, high companionship, ambition, the Parliament of England,—noble-sounding words! What boundless fields of enjoyment and exertion! Were not these enough to fill your heart?"

"Possibly. But all suddenly my life lost its savour; hope died, ambition vanished; existence revealed itself merely as a pilgrimage through a desert waste, haunted by lost illusions, and strewed with withered garlands. For a while I thought to end it, but a convalescent stage succeeded. I arranged my affairs and sold my place, resolved to seek a cure for my soul's unrest beyond the narrow bounds of Britain."

"Sold your ancestral home! How *could* you do such a thing? And what possible reason could you have had for such a mad step, as I have no doubt your friends called it?"

"That was the exact word they used. But I had made my choice. All things habitual and familiar had become distasteful—finally insupportable. I chose this colony as the most distant and interesting of England's possessions; and here I am, an exile and a wanderer in a new world, but"—turning to Erena—"honoured with the friendship of the best of guides and most charming of comrades."

She heard almost as one not hearing; then, suddenly fixing her eyes, bright with sudden fire, upon his countenance, said—

"May I be told the reason of this breaking away from all you held dear? You said I was a comrade,

and, believe me, no man ever had a truer. Was it a——"

"A woman? Of course it was a woman. When is man's life eternally blessed or cursed except by a woman? When is he hindered, injured, ruined, and undone by any event that has not a woman in it?"

"And she was beautiful, clever, high-born?"

"All that and more; I had never met with her equal. She was an acknowledged queen of society. She had but one fault."

"She did not love you?" said the girl, hastily, while her tones vibrated with suppressed excitement.

"Not sufficiently to link her fate with mine for the journey from which there is no retreat. She admitted approval, liking, respect—words by which women disguise indifference; but she believed that she had a mission in life, a call from heaven to go forth to the poor and afflicted, to elevate the race—a sacred task, for which marriage would unfit her."

"You pakehas are strange people," she said musingly. "And so she would not be happy because she desired to teach, to help the poor, the *common people!* And if she failed?"

"She would have wasted her own life, and ruined that of another."

"Life is often like that, so the books say—even the Bible. 'Vanity of vanities!' Either people do not get what they want, or find that it is not what they hoped for. Yet I suppose some people are happy—generally those who know the least. Listen to that girl singing. She is, if any one ever was."

They had been descending the hill, when at an angle of the narrow path they came upon a young

native woman, sitting at the door of a cottage which bore traces of European construction. A child stood at her knee, while she was busied about her simple task of needlework. The midday sun had warmed, not oppressed, the atmosphere, and there was an air of sensuous, natural enjoyment about her air and appearance as she looked over the river meadows where the tribe was employed. Her face lighted up with a smile of recognition as she saw Erena and her companion.

"Good morning, Hira. Where is Henare? You are all alone here?"

"Oh, he is at some road-work," she answered cheerfully, "but he always comes home at night. He gets good wages from the contractor."

"What a nice cottage you have!—weather-boarded, too. Who built it?"

"Oh, Henare and another half-caste chap sawed the boards and put it up. He likes living here better than in the kainga, and so do I. We can go down there when we want to."

"Good-bye, then. I have been showing this pakeha gentleman the pah.—Now, those people are just sufficiently educated to be happy and contented," said Erena. "He is a steady, hard-working fellow, and, as roads are beginning to be made, he is able from his pay to build a cottage and live comfortably."

"Education is a problem. If it leads people to think correctly on the great questions of life, it is—it must be—an advantage; but if, through anything in their condition, it produces envy and discontent, it is an evil, with which the nations have to reckon in the future."

"I sometimes wish I had not been educated myself," she said with a sigh. "I seem to have all manner of tastes and hopes most unlikely to be realized. Whereas——"

And just at that moment the lilt of the girl on the hillside came down to them, joyous with the magic tones of youthful love and hope. It furnished an answer to her questioning of fate, immediately apparent to both.

"Do not doubt for an instant!" exclaimed Massinger, touched to the heart by the girl's saddened look, and realizing the justice of her complaint. "*You* were never born for such a life. Nature has gifted you with the qualities which women have longed for in all ages. Your day will come—a day of appreciation, fortune, happiness. Who can doubt it that looks on you, that knows you as I do?"

In despite of her boding fears and the melancholy which so often depressed her, she was not proof against this confident prediction. Her youth's heyday and nature's joyous anticipation protested alike against a passing despondency.

"It may be as you say. Let me hope so. Do not the bright sun, the blue sky, the dancing waves, all speak of happiness? And yet, and yet—— But here comes your schooner, rounding the point. Our time of friendship is over. I wonder when we shall meet again?"

"When indeed?" thought her companion. But, determined in his heart that this should not be his last interview with this fascinating creature, so subtly compounded of the classic beauties of the wood-nymph

and the refinements of modern culture, he answered confidently—

"Before the year is out, surely. This war, if so it may be called, must only be a matter of months, perhaps weeks. The tribes, after a skirmish or two, can never be mad enough to defy the power of England. I must make a Christmas visit to Hokianga, if indeed we do not meet in Auckland before the spring is over, at the ratification of peace. There are sure to be festivities to celebrate the event, and you must dance with me at the Government House ball."

"Without shoes and stockings?" she said laughingly—"though I dare say I could manage them and the other articles. But we must not deceive ourselves. Months, even years, may not see the end of the war. May we both be living then, and may *you* be happy, whatever may be the fate of poor Erena!"

* * * * * *

That trim little craft, the *Pippi*, tight and seaworthy, was anchored near the wharf when they returned. Certain cargo, chiefly kauri gum and potatoes, had to be taken in, and the passengers were informed that towards sundown her voyage would be resumed. No time was lost, therefore, after lunch in sending their luggage on board, strictly limited as it had been to the requirements of the march. Warwick, who as paymaster had been giving gratuities to the native attendants who had come on from Rotorua, reported that they were more than satisfied, and would not forget the liberality of the pakeha. They would take the chance of returning to their *hapu*, where they had first been met with.

"It is as well to leave friends behind us," he said. "There will be all kinds of bush-fighting for volunteers such as you and I may be, and native allies often give warning when white ones would be useless. They may counteract that scoundrel Ngarara, who will do us a bad turn yet if he can."

"By the way, what became of him at Rotorua?"

"Oh, he cleared out. The kainga became too hot to hold him after the chief's dismissal. He will join some party of outlaws. They will be common enough when real business begins."

The chief walked up with Mannering from the kainga, and joined the party at lunch in order to say farewell. Massinger was much impressed with the calm dignity and courteous manner of this antipodean noble. Apparently unconscious of any incongruity between his national surroundings and those of his entertainers, he might have posed as a British kinglet during a truce between the Iceni and the world's masters.

"A friend of mine dined with the Reverend Mr. Marsden at Parramatta in 1814," said the host, "where he met Hongi Ika with his nephew Ruatara. That historical personage had recently returned from England, where he had been, if not the guest of a king, favoured with an audience, and in other ways enjoyed social advantages. My friend said none of the swells of the day could have conducted themselves with greater propriety or shown a more impassive manner."

"All the time Hongi had blood in his heart. He deceived the good Mikonaree," said the chief. "His thought was to destroy Hinaki and his tribe, the

Ngatimaru, as soon as he could buy muskets. Yet he did not take Hinaki by surprise, for he told him to prepare for war, even in Sydney. Then Totara fell, and a thousand Ngatimaru were killed. But the times are changed. The Queen is now our Ariki; for her we will fight, even if the Waikato tribes join Te Rangitake. The Ngapuhi and the Rarawa have taught the Waikato some lessons before. They may do so again."

* * * * * *

With a fair wind, light but sufficient to fill the sails of the *Pippi*, they swept down the river, which, increasing in volume near the heads, showed an estuary more than two miles in width. Not far from where the breakers proclaimed the presence of a bar, and opposite a point of land historically famous for tribal orgies, stood the ancient settlement of Waihononi. A substantial pier, available for reasonably large crafts, also a store and hotel, showed the proverbial enterprise of the roving Englishman. Fronting the beach stood Mr. Waterton's dwelling, a handsome two-storied mansion, surrounded by a garden which, even while passing, Massinger could note was spacious and thronged with the trees of many lands. An orchard on the side nearest the ocean was evidently fruitful, as the vine-trellises and the autumn-tinted leaves of the pears and apples showed. An efficient shelter had thus been provided against the sea-winds and the encroachment of the sand-dunes. These had been planted with binding grasses, including the valuable "marram" exotic, so wonderful a preventative of drift. Ability to protect as well as to form this outpost was not wanting, as evidenced by the presence of

half a dozen nine-pounders, which showed their noses through the otherwise pacific-appearing garden palisades.

Owing to certain mercantile arrangements, the departure of the *Pippi* was delayed for a day; a consignment of Kauri gum had not arrived. This was too valuable an item of freight to be dispensed with; and the Rawene dates of sailing not being so rigidly exact as those of the P. and O. and Messageries Maritimes, the detention was frankly allowed. Time was not of such extreme value on the Hokianga as in some trading ports. Mr. Waterton expressed himself charmed with the opportunity thus afforded of entertaining any friend of Mannering's. Massinger was equally gratified with the happy accident which permitted him to meet another of New Zealand's distinguished pioneers. So, general satisfaction being attained—rare as is such a result in this world of accidental meetings and fated wayfarings—a season of unalloyed enjoyment, precious in proportion to its brevity, opened out unexpectedly.

"I should have been awfully disgusted," was his reflection, as he found himself inducted into a handsome upper chamber, from the windows of which he beheld a wide and picturesque prospect, the foaming harbour bar, and the aroused ocean billows, "if I had lost this opportunity. The delay in land-travelling might have been serious, but, as the Maoris are not yet a sea-power, a day's passage more or less cannot signify." So, having dressed with whatever improvement of style his limited wardrobe permitted, he allowed the question of the sailing of the *Pippi* to remain in abeyance, and joined his host below.

Of that most interesting and delightful visit, it would be difficult to describe adequately the varied pleasures which thronged the waking hours. Lulled to sleep by the surges, which ceased not with rhythmic resonance the long night through; awaking to seek the river-strand, where the white-winged clustering sea-birds hardly regarded him as an intruder; the well-appointed and compendious library in which to range at will; the walks; the rides through forest and vale; the fishing expeditions, in one of which Massinger, proud in the triumph of having hooked a thirty-pound schnapper, discerned the snout of a dog-fish uprising from the wave. Then the evenings, prolonged far into the night, with tale and argument, raciest reminiscences of lands and seas from his all-accomplished host—*quarum pars magna fuit*—author, painter, sailor, explorer; such truly Arabian Nights' Entertainments Massinger had never revelled in before, and never expected to enjoy again.

* * * * * *

Auckland once more! The traveller, though now a confirmed roamer, was, for obvious reasons, by no means grieved to find himself again in the haunts of civilized man. He had been interested, instructed, illuminated, as he told himself, by this sojourn in woodlands wild. Face to face with Nature, untrammelled by art, he had seen her children in peace, in love and friendship. He was now, as all things portended, about to obtain a closer knowledge of them in war—a rare and privileged experience, unknown to the ordinary individual. How grateful should he be for the opportunity!

His first care was to possess himself of his letters and papers. There were not many of the former, still fewer of the latter. The county paper gave the usual information, as to poachers fined or imprisoned, a boy sent to gaol for stealing turnips. The hunting season had been fortunate. More visitors than usual. The riding of Mr. Lexington, son of the new owner of Massinger Court, had been much admired. That gentleman had exhibited judgment as well as nerve and horsemanship in (as they were informed) his first season's hunting in England. His shooting, too, was exceptional, and a brilliant career was predicted for him with the North Herefordshire hounds. A few epistles came from club friends and relatives. They were of the sort written more or less as a duty to the expatriated Briton, but which rarely survive the second year. The writers seemed much in doubt as to his *locale*, and uncertain whether New Zealand was one of the South Sea Islands or part of Australia. They all wished him good luck, and foretold future prosperity as a farmer, which was the only successful occupation out there (they were told) except digging for gold, which was agreed to be uncertain, if not dangerous. They concluded with a strong wish that he would come back a quasi-millionaire before he became a confirmed backwoodsman. And he was on no account to marry a "colonial" girl, when there were so many charming, *educated* damsels at home. This last from a lady cousin, who had with difficulty restrained herself from imparting the last South African news, as being apposite to his situation and circumstances.

These despatches were put down with an impatient

exclamation, after which he sat gazing from the window of his hotel, which afforded a fine view of the harbour. Then he took up a letter in a hardly feminine hand, which he had placed somewhat apart, as a *bonne bouche* for the latter end of the collection. This turned out to be from his candid and free-spoken friend, Mrs. Merivale, *née* Branksome—a matter which he had probably divined as soon as he glanced at the rounded characters and decided expression of the handwriting.

Opening it with an air of pleasurable expectation, and observing with satisfaction a couple of well-filled sheets, he read as follows:—

"My dear Sir Roland,

"Now that I am safely married and all that, I may make use of your Christian name, with the affectionate adjective, I suppose. The adverb in the first line was part of the congratulation of my great-aunt, who evidently thought that any girl with a decent amount of go in her, who did not habitually confine herself to phrases out of Mrs. Hannah More's works and read the *Young Lady's Companion*, was likely to end up with marrying an actor or an artist, whose useful and more or less ornamental professions she regarded as being much of a muchness with those of a music or dancing master.

"Well, one of the advantages of my present 'safe' and dignified position is that I can have friends, even if they happen to be young men, and give them advice. This I used to do before, as you know, though as it were under protest. 'This is all very fine,' I can hear you say, 'but why can't she leave off writing about herself, and tell me about—about—

why, of course, Hypatia Tollemache. Is she "safely" married (hateful word!), gone into a sisterhood, started for Northern India to explore the Zenanas, and teach the unwilling "lights of the harems" what they can't understand, and wouldn't want if they did?' None of these things have happened as yet, though they are all on the cards. She tried 'slumming' for a time, but her health broke down, and she had a bad time with scarlet fever. I made her come and stay with me after she was convalescent, and oh, how deadly white and weak she was!—she that was such a tennis crack, and could walk like a gamekeeper. I tried with delicacy and tact (for which, you know, I was always famous!) to draw her about your chances—say in five years or so. But she would not rise. Said, 'people were not sent into the world to enjoy themselves selfishly,' or some such bosh; that she had her appointed work, and as long as God gave her strength she would expend what poor gifts He had endowed her with, or die at her post; that in contrast with the benefits to thousands of our suffering fellow-creatures which one earnest worker might produce, how small and mean seemed the conventional marriage, with its margin narrowed to household cares, a husband and children! Were there not whole continents of our poor, deprived not only of decent food, raiment, lodging, by the merciless Juggernaut of inherited social injustice, but of the knowledge which every adult of a civilized community should enjoy without cost? And should any man or woman, to whom God has granted a luxurious portion of the blessings of life, stand by and refuse aid, the aid of time and personal gifts, to save these perishing

multitudes? When a girl begins to talk in this way, we know how it will end. In the uniform of a hospital nurse; in a premature funeral; in marriage with a philanthropist, half fanatic, half adventurer: what Harry calls a 'worm' of some sort—the sort of parasite that preys upon good-looking or talented women.

"Dear me! as my aunt says, I am getting quite flowery and didactic. Isn't that something in the teaching or preaching line? I forget which. Harry says I am a journalist spoilt. I don't know about that, but I *should* like to be a war correspondent. I am afraid there is no opening for a young woman in that line yet—a young woman who isn't clever enough to be a governess, loathes nursing, would assassinate her employer if she was a lady help, but who can walk, ride, drive, play tennis, and shoot fairly. By the way, there's going to be a war in the South Island, isn't it? Couldn't you contrive to be badly wounded? and perhaps—only perhaps—she, 'the fair, the chaste, the inexpressive she,' might come out to nurse you.

"Harry says *that's* a certain cure for—let me see—indecision, the malady of the century as regards young women. I remember being troubled with it myself once. He says I was—whereas now—but I won't inflict my happiness upon you.

"What a long letter, to be sure! Never mind the nonsense part of it. That is partly to make you laugh. He advises you, in the elegant language of the day, to 'keep up your pecker,' which he says means *nil desperandum*. I say ditto to Harry, and ask you to believe me, *always*,

"Your sincere friend,

"ELIZABETH MERIVALE."

Massinger put down the letter of his frank and kindly correspondent with feelings of a mixed nature, akin to pleasure, as evidencing an interest in his welfare not all conventional, but, on the other hand, recalling regrets exquisitely painful. These being partially dulled, he had mistakenly concluded that they had no further power to wound. And now, after a comparative cure, when his tastes had been satisfied and his curiosity aroused by the incessant marvels of a fantastic region, he had been recalled to the old land, resonant with the past anguish. The inhabitants of this enchanted isle, with their mingled pride and generosity, chivalrous courage and ferocious cruelty, had aroused his sympathies. There, beyond all, stood the figure of Erena, with her frank, half-childish ways, her countenance at one time irradiated with the joyous abandon of an innocent Bacchante, as she laughed aloud while threading with him the forest paths; at another time with shadowed face and downcast mien, when a presage of future ills caused the light to fade out of her luminous eyes.

The free forest life, with its daily recurrence of adventure and excitement, had sufficed for all the needs of his changed existence. And now, even by the hand of a friend, were the seeds of unrest sown. He thought of Hypatia Tollemache stricken down in the pride of her mental and bodily vigour, laid low in the conflict in which she had so rashly, so wastefully, risked her magnificent endowments. Had he been in the neighbourhood of Massinger, to cheer, to comfort, to gently question her plan of life, to offer to share it with her, to urge his suit with all the adventitious aid of predilection and propinquity, what success,

unhoped for, indescribable, might he not then have gained?

At this stage of his reflections he collected his correspondence, and, locking them up in his long-disused travelling portfolio, went forth into the town. Here he was confronted with the world's news, and details of this, the latest of Britain's little wars, in particular. First of all he betook himself to the offices of the New Zealand Land Company, where his first colonial acquaintance and fellow-passenger, Mr. Dudley Slyde, might be found.

That gentleman was, happily, in, but his arduous duties as secretary and dispenser of reports seemed for the moment in abeyance. He was engaged in packing a sort of knapsack to contain as many of the indispensable necessaries of a man of fashion, and apparently a man of war, as could be adjusted to an unusual limitation of space. A rifle stood in the corner of the apartment; a revolver of the newest construction then attainable lay on a table; the smallest modicum of writing materials was observable; and, neatly folded on a chair, was a serviceable military uniform.

"Delighted to see you, old fellow," said Mr. Slyde. "Sit down. Try this tobacco: given up cigars for the present—don't carry well. Suppose you've taken to a pipe, too, since you've begun your Maori career? Got back alive, I see. Didn't join the tribe, eh? Report to that effect. Girl at Rotorua, fascinating, very."

This suggestive compendium of his life and times caused a smile.

"You're as near the truth as rumour generally is," he said; "but I wonder that people concern themselves with the doings of this humble individual."

"New country, you know. Great dearth of social intelligence since the war. Tired of that, naturally. Free press, you know; say anything, confound them!"

"Another chapter in the book of colonial experience, which I shall learn by degrees. But what am I to understand by these warlike preparations?"

"You see before you a full private in the Forest Rangers. Must join something, you know. Situation serious. More murders. Waikato said to be joining. Taranaki settlers afraid of sack and pillage. Troops and men-of-war sent for. In the mean time, the devil to pay. What shall *you* do? Go back to England? I would, if I wasn't a poor devil of a Company's clerk and what you call it."

Massinger stood up, and looked at the lounging figure fixedly for a moment, until he saw a smile gradually making its way over the calm features of his companion.

"No, of course not," he said, as if answering an apparent protest. "Only my chaff. What will you join? Town volunteers? militia? *Ours* rather more aristocratic; trifle more danger, perhaps. Corps of the Guides, and so on. Von Tempsky's Forest Rangers! Splendid fellow, Von—Paladin of the Middle Ages. Seen service, too. Son of a Prussian general, I believe. Commission in 3rd Fusiliers in '44. Cut that, and travelled through Central America. Commanded irregular Indian regiment. Piloted officers of *Alarm* and *Vixen* in affair of the Spanish stockades at Castilla Viojo. Been in front everywhere, from Bluefields Bay to Bourke and Wills' Expedition in Australia, when he refused to be second in command. Man and regiment suit you all to pieces."

"Just the man I should choose to serve under. Where can I be sworn in, and when?"

"All right; I'll show you. Leave for the front, day after to-morrow. Jolly glad to have you, believe me."

This important ceremony being performed in due course, Massinger betook himself to the office of Mr. Lochiel, where he expected to receive fuller information as to the state of the country, and the prospects of a general rising. He was received by that gentleman with warmth and sincerity of welcome.

"My dear fellow," said he, "I am delighted to see you safe back. Macdonald and I were most anxious about you. We knew that you must pass through Maori country, and in the present disturbed state of the island there was no saying what might have happened to you, or indeed to any solitary Englishman. I hear that you returned by sea."

"I was advised to do so by Mr. Mannering at Hokianga, with whom I stayed for a few days."

"Best thing you could have done, and no one was more capable of giving you advice. He is judge and law-giver among the Ngapuhi, and a war chief besides. A truly remarkable man. I suppose you saw his handsome daughter? Wonderful girl, isn't she?"

"She certainly did surprise me. It seems strange that she can consent to lead a life so lonely, so removed from the civilization which she is so fitted to appreciate."

"And adorn likewise. We are all very fond of her here. But she is passionately attached to her father, and nothing would induce her to leave him. Have you heard the latest war news? Came in by special messenger this afternoon.."

"No, indeed. I am only generally aware that matters are going from bad to worse; that the militia and volunteers are called out; also the Forest Rangers, in which band of heroes I have just enrolled myself. Dudley Slyde and I will be companions in arms."

"Slyde! Dudley Slyde? Very cool hand; rather a dandy, people say. All the more likely to fight when he's put to it. He knows the country well, too. There is no doubt in my mind that every white man in the North Island who can carry arms will have to turn out."

"And how long do you think the war will last? Six months?"

"I should not like to say six years, but it will be nearer that than the time you mention. Maclean thinks five thousand troops will be required if the neighbouring tribes join Te Rangitake. Richmond is of the same opinion. Three Europeans have been shot on the Omata block. It was to avenge these that the volunteers and militia turned out, when the men of H.M.S. *Niger* behaved so splendidly; the volunteers also held their own."

"Is there any further demonstration?"

"Yes; a great *hui*, or meeting, has been held at Ngarua-wahia, on the Waikato. They say that three thousand Maoris were present, who were all on the side of Te Rangitake. Fifty of his tribe were there, asking for help."

"And what was the outcome of it all?"

"They were agreed in one thing—that the Governor was too hasty in fighting before it was proved to whom the land really belonged. The killing of men at the Omata block naturally followed when

once—as by destroying the pah at Waitara—war had begun."

"What became of Te Rangitake's fifty men?"

"Well, a body of the Nga-ti-mania-poto went back to Taranaki with them under Epiha, the chief. On the way they met Mr. Parris, the Taranaki land commissioner, whom the Maoris blamed for the Waitara affair. Te Rangitake's people wanted to kill him at once, but Epiha drew up his men, took him under his protection, and escorted him to a place of safety. Parris began to thank him, but was stopped at once. 'Friend,' said the chief, 'do not attribute your deliverance to me, but to God. I shall meet you as an enemy in the daylight. Now you have seen that I would not consent to you being murdered.'"

"What a fine trait in a man's character!" said Massinger. "And what discipline his men were in to withstand the other fellows, and save the man's life who was responsible, they believed, for all the mischief!"

"Yes, that's the Maori chief all over. He has the most romantic ideas on certain points, and acts up to them, which is more than our people always do. But I hear that the Governor is going to stop the Waitara business for the present—very sensibly—and give the natives south of New Plymouth a lesson."

"And what about the settlers around Taranaki?"

"They have been forced to abandon their farms. The women and children have taken refuge in the town, while Colonel Gold has destroyed the mills, crops, and houses of the natives on the Tataraimaka block. So the war may be regarded as being fairly, or rather unfairly, begun; God alone knows when it may end."

CHAPTER XI.

THE natives alleged that they had taken up arms against manifest wrong and injustice; but underlying all other motives and actions was the land question. The more sagacious chiefs entertained fears of the alienation of their territories. The growing superiority of the white settlers troubled them. Outnumbered, fighting against superior weapons, the day seemed near when, as in their songs and recitations, they began to lament, "The Maori people would be like a flock of birds upon a rock, with the sea rising fast around them." The time seemed propitious to unite the tribes against the common foe. The natives were estimated at sixty thousand, a large number being available fighting men. One determined assault upon the whites, who were not, as was supposed, more than eighty thousand, might settle the question.

Mr. (afterwards Sir) William Fitzherbert said in the House in 1861 that "the remark that we were living at the mercy of the natives was *true*, and reflected the greatest credit upon them. They had that knowledge, and yet forbore to use their power." Now, however, war was declared between the two races; the untarnished honour of the British flag must be maintained.

At that time in the distracted colony there lived, strange to say, a body of men whose interests were primarily concerned neither with the acquisition of land, the profits of trade, nor the so-called prestige of the British crown. Voyaging to New Zealand long years ago, they announced themselves to be the bearers of a Divine message, the significance of which was nearly two thousand years old. With the weapons of peace and good will they confronted the savage conquerors of the day. They lived among them unharmed, though not always able to prevent the torture of captives, the execution of enemies taken in fight, or to stay the hand of the fierce tribes thirsting for conquest or revenge. But they had done much. They had laboured zealously and unselfishly. They had risked their lives, and those of the devoted wives who had accompanied them into the habitations of the heathen. Following the example of their pioneer pastor, the saintly Samuel Marsden, they had introduced the arts of peace. They had ploughed and sowed, reaped and garnered. Favoured by the rich soil and moist climate, the cereals, the plants, the edible roots of older lands had flourished abundantly.

The heathen, though slow to perceive the benefit of such labours, had come to comprehend and to imitate. They shared in the fruits of the earth so abundantly provided. Trade had sprung up with adjoining colonies; and, with the white man's tools, his grain, his horses, his cattle, and sheep, in all of which the Maori was allowed to participate, came the revelation of the white man's God, the white man's faith, the white man's schools; the missionary's example did the rest. Gradually these agencies commenced to sway

the rude and turbulent tribes. A highly intelligent race, they deduced rules of conduct from the *mikonaree*, who was so different from any species of white man they had previously known. He was brave, for did he not from time to time risk his life, for peace' sake alone, between excited bands of enemies? He made war on none; he was slow to defend himself; he trusted for protection in that Great Being who had preserved him, his wife and little ones, in the midst of dangers by land and sea. From time to time he took dangerous journeys, he crossed swollen rivers, he traversed pathless forests, he risked his life in frail barks on stormy seas, to prevent war, to release captives.

After years of toil and trial the reward of these devoted servants of the Lord appeared to be assured. Many of the older chiefs, men of weight and authority, were baptized as earnest converts. Others protected the missionaries, though they refused to quit the faith of their ancestors. The schools flourished, and, unprecedented among other races, aged men learned to read and write. The Bible was translated into the simple yet sonorous Maori tongue. Saw-mills and flour-mills, owned by natives, arose; vessels even were built for them, in which their produce was taken to other ports. As far back as the bloodthirsty raids of Te Waharoa, the ruthless massacres of Hongi and Rauperaha, the missionary lived amidst the people for whose spiritual welfare he had dared danger and death, exile and privation.

The members of the different Christian Churches had shared emulously in the good work. Wesleyans and Presbyterians, the Church of England and the

Roman Catholic hierarchy, all had their representatives; all supported ministers vowed to the service of the heathen. Not always went they scathless. These soldiers of the Cross had seen their cottage homes burned, their families driven forth to seek shelter and protection at a distance. But, even when the worst passions of contending parties were aroused, there never failed them a chief or a warrior who took upon himself the charge of the helpless fugitives.

The earlier missions were organized by remarkable men. Their descendants occupy high positions, and inherit the respect which to their fathers was always accorded. But the most commanding figure in the little army of Christian soldiers, the most striking personality, was Selwyn, the first bishop of New Zealand. No ordinary cleric was the dauntless athlete, the apostolic prelate, the daring herald of good tidings, reckless of personal danger whether in war or peace. When the Waikato warriors, three hundred strong, went down the river from Ngarua-wahia under the young Matutauere, the bishop, travelling *on foot*, carried a message to friendly chiefs, who undertook to bar the war-party from passing through their territory. The settler at whose house the bishop arrived soon after sunrise, dripping with water from the fording of a creek, told the story. Had his remonstrances, strengthened by those of the venerable Henry Williams, Chief Justice Martin, and Sir William Denison, received the consideration to which they were entitled, "the great war of 1860, with its resultant, the greater war of 1863," would never have been fought. England's taxpayers would have been richer by the interest paid on a sum of several millions, and

England's dead, whose bones are resting in distant cemeteries, or in unknown graves on many a ferny hillside, would have been saved to family and friends.

However, at this stage all developments lay shrouded in the veil of the future. On whosoever lay the blame, war *had* commenced in earnest, and, according to British traditions, must be fought out. It was arming and hurrying with all classes and all ages in Auckland, A.D. 1860. Volunteers, militia, regulars, marines, bluejackets, were all under marching orders; martial law was proclaimed around Taranaki; all the ingredients of the devil's cauldron were simmering and ready to burst forth.

If Massinger had desired the excitements of danger, of battle, murder, and sudden death, this was the place and the time, to the very hour.

He had found no difficulty in enrolling himself among the force known as Von Tempsky's Forest Rangers. It was composed of the most resolute, daring spirits of the colony, many of whom had either been born in New Zealand or been brought up there from infancy. As a rule, used to country life, they rode well, and were good marksmen. A large proportion of them were the sons of farmers, but there were also men who had held good positions in their day. Having lost their money, or otherwise drifted out of the ranks of the well-to-do, they cheerfully enlisted in this arm of the force, which, if irregular in discipline, had a prestige which the ordinary militia and volunteer regiments lacked.

In such a corps the personal character of the leader is everything; and in this respect they were exceptionally fortunate. Carl Von Tempsky, the son of a

Prussian officer high in service, was a soldier of fortune in the best sense of the word. He had served for several years with credit, if not distinction, until the temptation of a free adventurous life proved too strong for him. He quitted the ranks of the 3rd Fusiliers for a long ramble in Mexico, during which he held various military commands.

After this foreign service he travelled through Central America, and knew Bluefields Bay and the Mosquito Shore, finally reaching New Zealand a year before the troublous time which supplied the warlike excitement in which his nature revelled. Producing his credentials, he was at once appointed to the force which, under his leadership, became so celebrated. His career was assured. Daring to recklessness, he was yet a thorough disciplinarian. Suave in manner, but unyielding, he controlled the wilder spirits in his regiment, while his confident and successful generalship roused his men to a pitch of enthusiasm which rendered them well-nigh irresistible in the field. As scouts they were invaluable, often securing information of the movements of the enemy, which the superstitious natives believed to be derived from witchcraft or sorcery. Their sudden onslaught upon outlying camps and redoubts demoralized the foe. While, whenever they had brought anything like an equal force to bay, they invariably routed them with loss, Von Tempsky, with his dark flashing eyes and cavalier curls, bearing himself as though gifted with a charmed life.

Such was the corps in which Massinger and Warwick found themselves; for the latter had made up his mind—on Mr. Slyde's principle, that in the present

state of affairs "one must join something"—to follow the same flag as his erstwhile employer, to whom he had become personally attached. Of the young Englishman's courage and liberality he had the highest opinion; of his prudence he felt doubtful. This was his chief reason, as he told Mr. Slyde, for enlisting.

"I shouldn't like to see him shot or tomahawked," he said. "He'll make a grand soldier if he gets time; but he's careless—deuced careless—and foolhardy. I'm afraid of some dog of a Waikato taking a pot-shot at him from behind a tree while he's thinking of something a thousand miles away."

* * * * * *

The Forest Rangers were a distinguished corps in which to be enrolled. From the beginning of the campaign their name had been in every one's mouth. Their dress was picturesque, though toned down in regard to the special services on which they were generally detailed.

More was expected of them by the public than of any other volunteer force. And the public was not often disappointed. Von Tempsky was the *beau ideal* of a leader of irregular troops. Full of military ardour, brave to recklessness, and of singular aptitude for command, the men under him got into the habit of regarding themselves as *enfants perdus*, knew not what fear was, and carried out with success sorties, reconnoissances, and scout duty of the most daring and desperate nature. The work was entirely to Massinger's taste. He found himself among kindred spirits. His former volunteer experience stood him in good stead. He was promised speedy promotion. He came to believe that a military career in war-time was, after all, his vocation,

and, as affording a succession of exciting adventures and dramatic incidents, the most desirable of all professions.

The minor successes gained by the Waitara tribes before November, 1860, had much elated the Ngatiawa, so that they conceived the idea of taking possession of the Mahoetai hill, close to the main road and near the Bell Block stockade. More than a hundred Ngatihauas and Waikatos established themselves there on a knoll surrounded by flax plants and *raupo* swamp. A combined attack of the 40th and 65th Regiments, with the militia, stormed the position. The volunteers and a company of the 65th were told off to the assault, which they made in good style. The Maoris stood their ground well, killing and wounding some of the assailants, but eventually were driven out of their rifle-pits. They took refuge in a swamp, but, the raupo being fired, fled for their lives. They lost thirty-four killed and fifty wounded. Several chiefs lay dead, including Taupo-rutu of Ngatihaua. Two were killed and four wounded of the volunteers.

After this affair two companies of the Forest Rangers were detailed, under Captains Von Tempsky and Jackson, for the purpose of scouring the forest between the Waikato and Auckland. Life and property in the settled districts had become insecure. To the great joy and satisfaction of Messrs. Slyde and Massinger, they found themselves in the first-named company, and were soon in the thick of a smart skirmish, in which two officers of a militia company were killed and half a dozen rank and file wounded, the enemy acknowledging more than double.

They were now ceaselessly occupied in scouring

the bush and moving from place to place, for weeks together having no settled camp or abiding-place. On the Waiari stream, when sent to clear the enemy out of the river-scrub, they killed five and took several prisoners in a very short onset.

A more serious engagement followed, when at Waiheke they were camped with the Arawa, two hundred strong, and found the enemy, composed of Ngaiterangi, Whaha-tohea, and Ngatiporou, awaiting them near Te Matata. The position was well chosen: a deep stream in front, on their left flank a raised beach, their right on the sea. The Forest Rangers carried the creek with a rush, well supported by the Arawa, after which the enemy waited no longer, but, pursued by the Rangers, fled until the Awa-te-Atua river was reached. The British loss was light, but included Toi, the brave old chief of the Arawa. The enemy lost seventy men.

Here Massinger had an opportunity of witnessing a characteristic incident of Maori warfare. A celebrated chief of the Whaha-tohea, being taken prisoner, fully expected to be put to death. Captain Macdonnell took him under his protection, telling him that he had nothing to fear. From the men probably not, but Macdonnell had not calculated on the feelings of a bereaved wife. Toi's widow, "wroth in wild despair," persuaded some one to load a rifle for her, and walking up to the chief, blew his brains out. The tribe, after much argument, came to a decision much resembling that of Bret Harte's jury at White Pine, viz. "Justifiable insanity."

"Must be in luck now," said Mr. Slyde one morning, after an orderly had been seen riding into

camp. "Shouldn't wonder if the general had got some special work cut out for us."

"I hope so," replied Massinger. "We'll know soon, as Warwick is talking to Captain St. George, whom Von is sure to give the first order to. Now both are called up. Something on by the look of Warwick. Here he comes."

"Well, where are we to go, most noble earl and king-maker? Route to the Uriwera or the Reinga?"

"There's an off chance of the last place for some of us," said Warwick, who didn't care for Maori jokes, detached, as by education and travel he had become, from his maternal relatives. "The route is to the Patea River near the edge of a forest, where the whole of the tribes of the North Island might hide. The villages there are not exactly in trees, but nearly as hard to climb up to."

"All the better—give us new ideas," said Slyde. "Tired of this flat country work.

'My heart's in the Highlands,
My heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands,
A-chasing the deer.'

What a country this would be for red deer! By the way, I wonder if I shall ever have the luck to pot a stag of ten? No saying; come some day. When do we start, and how many men?"

"Two companies, fifty each. Daylight in the morning. Camp at Kaka-ramea."

Stationed at this inviting locality, where, as Mr. Slyde remarked, the country consisted of hills without valleys, rivers without bridges, and inconvenient cliffs

thrown in, the hawk eyes of Warwick discovered a track leading up the face of an almost perpendicular cliff.

"This track goes up the cliff, but how are *we* to go up?" asked Massinger. "A goat couldn't do it."

"Do you see those climbers carelessly thrown along the track?"

"I do see some supple-jack here and there."

"Those," said Warwick, "are Maori ladders, which you will find strong enough when it is your turn to try them. Of the two, I would rather trust to them than ordinary rope."

"When do we start?" asked Massinger.

"Not to-day, or perhaps to-morrow. They have scouts on the watch. The major won't move until they get careless. Then a midnight affair."

"Regular 'Der Freischutz' business," said Slyde. "Hour midnight. Circle. Skulls neatly arranged. 'Zamiel, come forth!' etc. Owls in forest, please attend. Come to think, we *are* rather in the Freischutz line. If we get back to Auckland one of these fine days (or years), good idea for private theatricals."

"We shall have them in private and public," said Warwick, "before the season's over. Likely to end up with a tragedy, too."

"Tragedy or comedy, we shall be in the front row," said Massinger; "but, the overture not having commenced, we can't criticize the performance. Our *jeun premier*, Von Tempsky, however, would do honour to any opera in Europe. What a romantic-looking fellow he is in his undress uniform! Calm, yet determined-looking, an expression which would never alter in the face of death. Hair worn longer than we Englishmen

affect, but it becomes some people. As a fashion it's certain to come in again. Cavalry sabre, forage cap, blue tunic, boots to the knee,—there you have him. He would have been a *Feld* some day if he had remained in the Imperial service."

"Better that he is with us to-night," said Warwick. "Besides being a first-class leader, he is one of the smartest scouts that ever picked up a track. Did you ever hear what he did at Papa-rata? Many a man wears the Victoria Cross for less."

"No—that is, heard generally. Tell us about it," said Slyde. "Afraid I shouldn't do much in that line."

"Nor I either," said Massinger. "I am all ears."

"You'll never be all eyes, captain," said Warwick, with a grim smile. "And by Maori custom a captured scout is doomed to tortures that can't be told. I always keep one shot in my revolver."

"For whom?" asked Massinger.

"For *myself*, if ever I'm 'jumped,'" answered Warwick, who had acquired, among his other experiences, a few miner's idioms. "But here is the story. The general wanted a sketch of the enemy's works at Papa-rata, which they had occupied in force. Our Von undertook the service—sort of forlorn hope business—and, like everything he ever began, carried it out thoroughly. He managed to hide himself in the scrub and flax in the very midst of the natives, and, far worse for discovery, their prowling dogs, popularly supposed to wind a white man a mile off. There he calmly sketched the position, and got safe back into camp. They gave him his commission for it."

"And well he deserved it," said Massinger.

"So say I," chimed in Slyde. "Good thing

about a war, attracts best fellows of all nationalities—Johnnies that prefer discomfort and revel in danger; used to light marching order, too. Sort of war correspondent business; murder and sudden death thrown in. Deuced exhilarating when you come to think of it."

"Do you know, I find it so," answered Massinger, entering into the joke. "And our light marching order is a triumph of economy of space. Nothing approaches it but a middy's wardrobe, and he has a ship to carry it. I must have myself photographed when we—may I say *if*—we return to camp. Let me see—Forest Ranger, 'in his habit as he lived;' applicable to either case, you see. Item—*Swag*. Did I think I should ever carry one? One blanket, one great coat, twenty rounds of ammunition, all put up in a waterproof; three days' rations of meat and biscuit; half a bottle of rum. Revolver, carbine, cartridge-box, tomahawk—all most useful, not to say ornamental, when sliding down precipices in the dark, as we did on entering camp last night."

"Camp accommodation; don't forget that," added Slyde.

"Fire strictly forbidden. Sleeping apartment of the wild boar of the forest. I'll swear that where you and I, Warwick and Hay, slept last night—for we *did* sleep—under the hollow rimu tree, had belonged to one. 'Feeds the boar in the old frank,' as the wild prince says. Also, over and above all these pleasures and palaces, our lives hang on a chance from day to day—that of being surrounded in the heart of a forest, and cut off to a man."

"Conversation most improvin'," said Mr. Slyde. "Seems to lack the comic element, though! 'Want a

piano,' as the Johnnie said to Thackeray after lecture. As we've an early *engagement*—ha, ha!—in the morning, suppose we turn in? Now 'I lay me down to sleep.' Rain recommencing. 'Drought broken up,' as they say in Australia."

It was not very late—nine o'clock, indeed, no more. Camp evenings were apt to be long without late dinners or books. However, it not being their watch, the friends lay down in their "lair," and in five minutes, despite the rain, from which, indeed, the o'er-arching tree in great part saved them, fell fast asleep.

At midnight on the third day the march was recommenced and the cliff path reached. Von Tempsky, with seventy men, made a start punctually, as was his wont. Massinger felt doubtfully entertained at the idea of swinging in mid-air, clinging to a rude arrangement of trailers, with, perhaps, expectant Maoris at the top. However, he forbore remark, and after he had seen Von Tempsky shin up the swaying half-seen line like a man-of-war Jack, he felt reassured.

"What a leader he is!" thought he.

> "'Alike to him the sea, the shore,
> The branch, the bridle, and the oar.'

We are all in hard condition, luckily."

Between the precarious foothold on the cliff and the ladder of withes—Warwick, by the way, was immediately behind him—he reached the top safely.

"Here we are!" he said, as Warwick sprang up and stood by his side. "I shouldn't care, though, to go *down* the same way, especially if they had crossed our track and decided to wait there for our return."

"They would find an officer and thirty men there," said Warwick. "Our Von always takes care to leave a place open for retreat. Catch him napping!"

Dawn found them in a deserted village, recently occupied, however, as the fires were still alight. Pushing on across a gorge, smoke was seen rising, and on the summit of the ridge a large clearing was sighted, with a number of whares at the other end.

"There they are!" said Massinger.

"Those whares are only temporary," explained Warwick—"used by the natives to put in a crop or take it up. I can see Maoris; they don't see us, however."

The order came at that moment to extend in line along the forest edge, behind a barricade of dead timber, thrown aside from the clearing. This they climbed, but were immediately seen by the natives, who fired a volley, mortally wounding a young officer and one of the Rangers. The senior officer, next to Von Tempsky, was also hit. The attempt to dislodge the enemy from some fallen timber, under cover of which they were able to hold the attacking force in check, failed, owing to their right resting on a cliff, not previously noticed. A smart skirmish took place, however, in which the enemy was routed, leaving three dead on the ground.

"Had the best of it," said Mr. Slyde after supper. "Not a glorious victory, though, by any means. Two to one—bad exchange against natives. Poor young Stansfield, too! Took me and Warwick all we knew to get him down that beastly ladder."

"Poor chap!" said Massinger. "What spirits he was in when we started! Stark and cold now. Fortune of war, I suppose."

"Bush-fighting not all beer and skittles," remarked his companion. "Better luck next time."

One of the really "stunning engagements" (as Mr. Slyde phrased it) in which Massinger and his two comrades took active part, was the fight before Paterangi. The enemy's works were about three miles distant from the headquarters' camp at Te Rore.

The sailors, under Lieutenant Hill, H.M.S. *Curaçoa*, had their camp close to the landing-place, to which the *Avon*, with stores, made daily trips.

The tars, to relieve the monotony of camp life, had got hold of cricketing materials, and on fine afternoons the stumps were set up and play carried on, *secundum artem*, as unconcernedly as if there was no such thing as a Maori foe within a few hundred yards of them.

"Look at Von Tempsky!" said Slyde (the Rangers being at headquarters in case any specially dangerous scouting was on hand.) "Cool as if he was listening to a military band in Berlin. Trifle better music there, I dare say. Picturesque-looking beggar, isn't he? Cigar in mouth, forage cap always on the side of his head. Curls *à ravir*. Not our form, but they become him. Wouldn't think he was the man that spoilt an ambush at Mount Egmont, when the general made his point to point march through the bush there."

"Just the man, I should think. But how was it?"

"Rangers, you see, marched with the column. Passing through thickest spot, Von left track with his men and vanished. Troops thought took wrong path. Sharp firing heard. Von reappears front of the column, forcing his way through the supple-jacks,

sword in one hand, revolver in the other, knife between his teeth, dripping with blood. Ambush laid for troops—destroyed it."

"No wonder everybody swears by him. I suppose these fellows would have had a steady volley at the column?"

"Regular pot-shot. Sure to kill officers, besides twenty or thirty Tommies. Might even have bagged the general. Great hand at the bowie-knife, Von. Learned that in Mexico. Throws it to an inch. Great weapon at close quarters."

"I dare say," replied Massinger. "I don't seem to take to it myself. All's fair in war, of course."

"Suppose we have a bathe in the Mango-Piko? It feels warmer this afternoon."

This motion being carried, our triumvirate proceeded to the river-bank with a party of the 40th, men who bathed there every day.

"The water's all right," said Warwick, "but I don't like this manuka scrub. The river's not too wide, and there's good cover on the other side."

"Surely there's no chance of there being natives so close to the camp?" said Massinger, who thought Warwick a trifle over-cautious this time, often as he had reason to admit his astonishing accuracy in all that concerned woodcraft.

This occasion was not destined to be an exception, for no sooner had they undressed than a volley from across the river showed that natives *had* been concealed on the opposite bank.

Fortunately, a covering party of twenty men under a lieutenant had been sent with them, who immediately returned fire, and a sharp exchange began.

The sounds of the firing brought up a reinforcement from the 40th and 50th Regiments, under Colonel Havelock, who got to the rear of the concealed natives, the same ti-tree which had screened them serving to hide the troops. At an old earthwork they came suddenly upon them. Captain Jackson of the Forest Rangers and Captain Headley of the Auckland Rifles marched with the supports, eventually driving the Maoris from their position in the earthwork. A hot rally while it lasted, but a Victoria Cross was gained in it by Captain Headley, who, under heavy fire and with his clothes riddled with bullets, carried out a wounded soldier.

"D——d nuisance!" said Mr. Slyde, resuming his garments. "Left arms at camp, or we might have had a throw in. Other chaps got all the fun. Oh, here comes Warwick, *heavily* armed, and no mistake."

It was even so. That resourceful henchman had bolted back to camp and returned with his arms full of their carbines and revolvers.

"And, by Jove! here comes Von Tempsky and part of our company," exclaimed Massinger, unusually excited. "Was there ever such luck?"

No time was lost in joining the Rangers, who had just been ordered to cross the river and clear the scrub.

Without a moment's hesitation, headed by Von Tempsky, they plunged into the stream, and emerging like modern river-gods dripping with the Mangopiko, rushed on the enemy. A desperate hand-to-hand fight ensued. The natives retreated, leaving eight dead, side by side, amid the trampled fern. The Rangers only had three men wounded, including

Mr. Massinger, in the arm—his first title to distinction, as having bled in the cause of his Queen and country.

Like many other small wars and skirmishes, it led to complications. A body of natives came out from the pah at Paterangi to help their people. The skirmishers of the 40th were thrown forward to check them. Five men killed and six wounded of the 40th, while the natives from Paterangi lost over forty killed and thirty wounded.

Mr. Massinger's arm was sore enough that night, though he was loth to admit it.

"'Quite enough to get,' as the soldier remarked in 'Pickwick.' Deuced hot work while it lasted. New style of bathing-party. Have to look up a tree before you sit under it next. Maoris everywhere."

"'All's well that ends well,'" rejoined Massinger, with his arm in a sling. "Lucky that Warwick brought the carbines. I wouldn't have missed that dash across the river for worlds. We also covered the rear effectually, Von Tempsky marching as if he was on parade."

"He wasn't the only one who was cool," said Warwick. "The adjutant-surgeon stopped the bleeding in your arm as steady as if he was in the hospital tent. Bullets pretty thick, too."

The colonel commanding did justice to the merits of all concerned, and when Lieutenant Roland Massinger's name occurred in the list of wounded among the Forest Rangers, under Major Von Tempsky, that gentleman felt himself more than recompensed for any trifling inconvenience he might have undergone.

CHAPTER XII

THE campaign dragged on till June, the antipodean mid-winter, was reached. Dark were the long cold nights, ceaseless the rain, as the troops and volunteers struggled through forests knee-deep in mud, with creeks to ford and flax swamps to wade through.

An insufficient commissariat tried the constitution of the hardiest. Massinger was now in a position to comprehend thoroughly the fearful odds against which the British regulars fought in the American revolutionary war. There they confronted an enemy whose very children, as soon as they were strong enough to lift the long rifle of the period, were the deadliest of marksmen.

Behind the forest pillars or beneath the fallen logs, what perfect cover had the backwoodsmen, trained to all woodcraft and inured to a hunter's life, where subsistence often depended upon patient stalking and accuracy of aim!

Almost similar conditions prevailed in this guerilla warfare to which England's armaments stood committed. The "mute Maori" glided through the underbrush or amid the fern, himself invisible, until he arose in open order before the astonished troops.

"At times a warning trumpet note,
At times a stifled hum,"

he had winded from afar. Reckless in assault as elusive in retreat, the desperate Maori seemed a demoniac foe. Living on fern-root, shell-fish, or kumera, he needed no baggage. The women of the tribe, mingling with the warriors, cooked the necessary food, carried off the wounded, and were not averse to occasional fighting. With ten thousand regular troops, as well as levies of militia and volunteers against them, with powerful tribes of their own race, *rusés* and daring as themselves, who fought for the pakeha with a ferocity not exceeded in the bloodiest tribal wars, their position appeared hopeless. Still the stubborn Maori held his own. In staying power, as in other respects, the aboriginal, the Briton of the South, displayed his similarity to his Northern prototype. No such conflict had been waged by an aboriginal race against the arms of civilization since the Iceni and the Brigantes confronted Cæsar's legions, fought the world's masters for generation after generation, century after century, till, wearied with the profitless strife and barren occupation, they withdrew, and left the savage inhabitants to a climate of such rigour and gloom that they alone seemed to be its fitting inhabitants. Such for a time appeared to be no improbable *finale* to the Waikato war. Months, even years, passed without tangible result, without solid advantage to the invaders.

So the seasons wore on, until Massinger began to look upon himself less as a colonist than a soldier. "The reveillé," the bugle-call, became familiar to him and his companions; for neither Slyde nor Warwick,

more than himself, dreamed of quitting service until the war was over, the play played out.

Both Englishmen had been wounded at different times, but so far not severely. They were commencing to feel the true fatalism of the soldier, convinced that they were invulnerable until their predestined hour. They came to be well known among the forces, with their guide, from whom they were rarely separated. With no personal interest in the matter, with no land to defend, no interest to conserve, they remained simply because they happened to be on the spot, and, coming of fighting blood, had no power to withdraw themselves from the fascination of battle, murder, and sudden death.

Strange as it seemed to Massinger, they had never happened to meet Erena. They heard of her from time to time, but Mannering and his *hapu*, though always at the front, were either in another direction when they fell across the Ngapuhi contingent, or the Forest Rangers were on outpost duty.

Nor was intelligence wanting of traits of heroism on her part in the numerous skirmishes and sorties of which her father was the leader. Dressed like his Maori allies, with a plume of feathers in his hair, with cartridge-pouch and waistbelt accoutred proper, wherever the fight was fiercest, high above friend and foe rose the tall form of Allister Mannering.

And ever as the battle-waves surged forward, or were rolled back by superior forces, the eager, fearless face, the huntress form of Erena was seen, disdainful of danger as the fabled goddess in the Trojan war. Her chosen band of dusky maidens—relatives or near friends—accepted her guidance, and

surrounded her in every engagement; many a wounded soldier or native ally had they borne from the fray, or succoured when wounded and helpless on the field. Often had they warned outlying settlers when the prowling *taua* was approaching the unsuspecting family. Nay, it was asserted that had Erena's counsel been taken, her letter regarded, the murder of the missionary, with wife and babes, might have been averted. Sometimes near, sometimes afar, but never absolutely within speech or vision, the situation to Massinger's aroused imagination became tantalizing to such a painful degree that he felt resolved to terminate it without further delay.

It is not to be supposed that he was without occasional tidings from that land of his fathers, from which, as he sometimes considered, he had hastily exiled himself.

For was it not exile, in the fullest sense of the word? Œdipus in Colona was a joke to it. Was this travel-stained, over-wearied, haggard man, who trudged day by day, and often from night to dawn, through darksome woods and endless marshes, in daily risk of being "shot like a rabbit in a ride," the same Massinger of the Court, who was wont to turn out so spick and span at covert and copse?

He could hardly believe it, any more than that the sardonic soldier at his side, whose unsparing comments included the Government, the New Zealand Company, the soldiers, and the sailors, the general, the governor, the colonists, the natives, by no means excepting himself, as the champion idiots of the century, was the erstwhile debonair Dudley Slyde, faultless in costume as unapproachable in languid elegance.

It has been observed that a campaign brings out the best or worst points of a man's character. This struck Massinger as a proposition proved to demonstration when he saw the cheerful acquiescence of Mr. Slyde in the drudgeries and dangers of their harassing expeditions. He it was who volunteered for "fatigue" duty by night or day; ready at any hour to help to bury the dead, to forage for provisions, to cover retreat, to attend the wounded, at the same time keeping up the cheerfulness of the rank and file by his withering execrations, which, from their very incongruousness, always provoked the laughter of his comrades.

The simple privates voted him the "rummest chap as ever they see," at the same time fully appreciating his coolness under fire and many-sided utility.

Nor was Warwick unmindful of the necessity of keeping up the reputation of *les trois mousquetaires*, as they were occasionally called. He exhibited in his personal traits certain distinct tendencies derived from an admixture of the races. Grave, steadfast, and trustworthy, obedient to orders, as became his Anglo-Saxon descent, he was occasionally affected with the Berserker frenzy of his mother's people. At such moments he would rush to the front, heedless of friends or foes, and indulge himself in the blood-fury of her reckless race. When mixed up with friendly natives he would stalk through the hottest of the fire with those younger chiefs, who desired to have some daring achievement to boast of when the war was over. It more than once happened that his companions returned no more, having fallen to a man in the breach, or when they had surmounted the

lofty palisades which engirdled the fortress, behind which lay trench and fascine, gallery and bastion. So far Warwick had always returned, blood-stained and powder-blackened, with torn uniform and dimmed accoutrements, dropping with fatigue, and half dead with thirst, but safe and unharmed, ready—and more than ready—for the next day's exploits. When in this mood he had been seen side by side with the famous Winiata, standing on the parapet of a beleaguered redoubt, having guns handed to them, with which they kept up a ceaseless fusilade, they themselves the centre of a close and deadly volley.

Even in the midst of war's alarms theEnglish soldier finds time for recreative pastime and the omnipresent national sports.

Football and cricket, polo and other matches flourish, in which distinction is enjoyed with a pathetic disregard of the morrow. When it chances that the "demon bowler" of the regiment, who has taken five wickets in four "overs," is himself bowled next day with a smaller ball and yet more deadly delivery, short shrift and brief requiem suffice. The batsman's stumps are scattered, and no L.B.W. affords an appeal to the umpire.

In polo the fortune of war, indeed, dwarfs the untoward accidents of the game. Who can object to a "crumpler" of a fall, when horse and rider may so soon form part of the sad company "in one red burial blent"? No! the bugle-call sounds to arms, and his comrades form in line, all unheeding of the gap in the ranks.

There is a superficial appearance of callousness about our British customs in this respect. But none

the less is deep and sincere mourning made for the dead; none the less among Britons in action all over the world is care for the wounded, self-sacrificing heroism in the field, so common as to be inconspicuous.

Hurdle-racing, not to say steeplechasing, was in abeyance, owing to the low condition of the cavalry arm, and the extreme difficulty in procuring fodder. The climate and the native pasture forbade the grass-feeding, which in Australia would have been all-sufficing. But polo, owing to the exertions of those officers who had served in India, and to the occasional capture of Maori ponies, became most popular. Football, again, was eminently suited to the damp and cold region in which their lines were cast, and supplied the means of warmth and exercise at small cost.

These sports kept up the spirits of the variously gathered forces. The Maori allies took to the game of football with zest and enthusiasm, their astonishing activity and strength making them almost an overmatch for their British instructors. Their shouts and war-cries, when there was no particular need for caution, made the camp lively and animated, tending to produce, as similar sports peculiar to England and her colonies always do, a feeling of harmony and good fellowship between the different orders and races, invaluable for the *morale* of the heterogeneous force gathered on the banks of the Waikato.

But all other interests and expectations were dulled in comparison with those which prevailed on the day when the somewhat irregular arrival of the mails took place.

Often by water would the messenger appear. A canoe would steal up to river-bank or lake-shore

at midnight, freighted with the hopes and fears of a thousand lives ; or a solitary native would come tearing through the mazes of the forest, bleeding from briars, panting audibly, like an Indian runner in the old French war of the Canadas, and, casting down the precious wallet with a "hugh!" expressive of deep relief, saunter off to the Maori camp, where a sufficiency of pork and kumera awaited him, or at the worst, dried shark, pippi, and fern-root.

Then, as the priceless missives were handed to the feverishly expectant possessors, what sudden revulsions of feeling were apparent! Few had sufficient self-control to await the moment when the contents could be devoured in secrecy. But, standing about in all directions, could the recipients be descried with open letter and expressive features, relaxed, fixed, satisfied, overjoyed, relieved, despairing, according as the Fates had dealt the measure of weal or woe.

At such a momentous ordeal, when his letters were given to Massinger, one came in the well-known hand of Mrs. Merivale, *née* Branksome.

Putting the collection into his pocket without trace of excitement, he wended his way to his tent, where, seating himself, he opened the envelope, and read as follows :—

"My dear Sir Roland,

"As Harry sees all your letters, and occasionally criticizes mine from a man's point of view (terribly wrong, as I always tell him), I may without indiscretion supply the possessive prefix. Sounds quite learned, doesn't it? Besides, ten—or is it not twelve?—thousand miles' distance prevents a hint of

impropriety in our correspondence. After all this explanation, I proceed to say 'How do you do?' How are you getting on in that most unpleasant war, which would be ludicrous if it were not so dangerous, and into which you seem to have rushed for no conceivable reason, but because you disapprove and have no earthly interest connected with it? Talk of man being a rational being, indeed!

"He often argues like one, but how rarely—almost never, indeed—does he *act* in accordance with his theories!

"However, like all decent Englishmen embarked in a quarrel, you are bound in honour to go through with it. The question which perplexes your friends—and you have a few, rather more than the average, indeed—is *why* you should have gone into it at all. I am not going to say 'Que le diable, etc.'—by the way, I ought to have stopped at the 'Que'—but we all *think so!*

"One exhausts one's self in trying to find a cause (reason, of course, there is none) for this effect; that is, for your migration to the 'other side of the world,' as Jean Ingelow has it in that dear song of hers. I have been reading German philosophy lately, and now know that you must go much further back than is generally thought necessary for people's tastes and dispositions, principles, and actions.

"This, then, would be the formula. First, Hypatia's parents, or one of them, having, on account of some accidental family trait, bestowed upon her an abnormally altruistic nature.

"Then they proceed to furnish her with a shamefully superior and unnecessary education, developing

her intellect at the expense of her common sense, so that she feels herself vowed to the social advancement of the masses (as if they are not even now unpleasantly close to the classes). This by the way.

"Cause No. 2: Strenuous attempts to move the social fabric, with the usual effect—loss of health and failure of 'mission,' self-dedicated.

"Cause No. 3: Her refusal of the 'plain duty of womanhood,' and so on, which wrecks *your* career, as far as we can see, without improving her own. However, she will doubtless plead that 'her intentions were good.' Harry, who has been looking over my shoulder (most improperly, I tell him), comes out with, 'D—n her intentions!' (or words to that effect). 'Women always say so when they've made a more destructive muddle of things than usual!' He has now been chased out of the room, so I proceed to finish my letter in peace.

"As it *is* nearing the end, I may treat you to a bit of news which you may regard as more important than the whole of the preceding despatch. Our mutual friend has a dearest chum in New Zealand, to whom she is devoted—the wife of a missionary clergyman. They live in your shockingly disturbed district, where for some years they have been converting the heathen with gratifying results. This Mary Summers is the best of young women, and, when she is not making 'moral pocket 'ankerchers,' writes to our Hypatia. I don't want to be irreverent (Harry says—well, never mind; but he doesn't like that kind of thing—says it's bad form), only the temptation was irresistible. Well, where was I? Oh! she says 'the field' is most interesting; the Maoris

are a noble race—ten times more worthy of a life's devotion than our slum savages, and so on. Well, Hypatia, being discouraged about *them*, appears to me to incline to a Maori crusade. So that it is *possible*—mind, I go no further—that one of these days you might see 'the—er—one loved name,' or 'once loved,' as the case might be, in a passenger list.

"More wonderful things have happened before now, and I certainly *did* find her reading 'Ranulf and Amohia' the other day.

"It is really *dreadful* the length of this letter of mine. However, I must tell you a little news. Your successor at Massinger Court has got on very well with the county. Just at first, of course, people, after the manner of our cautious country-folk, fought shy of them. After a while, however, they were voted 'nice,' especially after Lord Lake, an ex-Governor, and his wife, Lady Maud, came down to stay with them, and it leaked out that they were related to the Lexingtons of Saxmundham. Not that *they* mentioned the fact. Harry says the son is a capital fellow —rides, shoots, hunts, in most proper style, quiet in manner, but amusing, and plays polo and cricket better than most men.

"The girls, too, are pretty and pleasant, great at tennis and archery, besides being musical. The father subscribes liberally to the county charities, and is hand-and-glove with the parson, who says he is unusually well read. So you are in danger of being forgotten —do you hear, sir?—and serve you right, by all but *a very few*, who still think occasionally of the *rightful owner* of Massinger Court and Chase; among whom

I am proud to enrol myself, and (this *is* the last sheet) remain

"Always yours very sincerely,

"ELIZABETH MERIVALE."

* * * * * *

The dawn was breaking on the morning of a cold and gusty day, as the shivering men of the No. 2 Company of the Forest Rangers were drying themselves at an indifferent fire, when Warwick held up a warning hand.

"Some one coming."

Mr. Slyde lifted his rifle carelessly, and remarked, "A morning call. One of our scouts, or a *toa* bent on death or glory. He should have come last night, when we were too tired to cook supper; now I feel as if a brush with the 'hostiles' would revive me."

"It's no native," affirmed Warwick. "He has boots on, and is walking too fast for a surprise party. Here he comes."

As he spoke, the bush parted, and a plainly dressed man in dark clothes walked rapidly across the open ground in front of the camp.

"By Jove, it's the bishop!" said Mr. Slyde. Then advancing, he bowed, and in deeply respectful tones greeted the apostolic prelate who departed so seriously from the modern manner of bishops of the Established Church.

"I am afraid, my lord, that you have had an uncomfortable journey; you must have started early if you came from Pukerimu."

"Comfort and I have long been at odds," said the stranger—for it was indeed George Augustus Selwyn, the famous Bishop of New Zealand, who

stood there drenched to the skin, with the water dripping from his garments—"and, will be until this unhappy war is over. The fact is, that I heard through a native convert that the missionaries at Ohaupo were in danger, so I started at midnight to warn them. The creek was flooded, or I should not have looked so much like a drowned rat."

Massinger, who had been gazing intently at the devoted Churchman of whom he had heard such wondrous stories—tales of his courage, his athletic feats, his influence among the natives, his eloquence, his tender treatment of the wounded on both sides—was lost in admiration as he gazed at the expressive countenance, so noble in its simplicity. He now came forward with an offer of a change of garments.

"My friend, Lieutenant Massinger," said Mr. Slyde, introducing him. "He has only joined recently, and, indeed, is but lately from England."

"Massinger of the Court? Surely not!" said the bishop, with an air of much interest. "How strange that we should meet thus! I knew your people well before I left England. I will not ask you how you came to be thus engaged, but must content myself with declining your courteous offer. We are all in one boat as to discomfort. I am only bearing my share of the common burden; and, indeed, I believe that were I to trouble my head about these trifling privations, I should lose my robust health, and, like some of my poor native parishioners, become a prey to ordinary ailments."

At this stage of the interview an orderly arrived with a pressing invitation from the senior officer of the Forest Rangers, who trusted that his lordship

would not delay joining their mess at breakfast; so, with a hearty expression of thanks and adieu, this devoted soldier of the Church Militant departed with the orderly, every soldier within sight saluting as he passed.

"That's a *man*, if you like!" said Mr. Slyde. "If there were more like him, no other religion would have a chance with ours. Travelled on foot from coast to coast—in all weathers, too. Night or day, high water or low, hot or cold, all alike to him. Opposed to the war, too, back and edge. Government taken his advice, never have broken out."

"And now, what is his work?"

"Peace and good will on earth. Can't be hoped for just yet, of course. Making the best of it now, until the end comes. Risked his life over and over again. Worst of it, natives beginning to doubt him —fired at him, indeed. Feels it bitterly, they say. Been advised to keep out of the way. Scorns prudence. Says it's his duty to go to the front. Careful only about other men's lives."

"I've often heard of him," said Massinger; "I'm thankful now that I've seen him. It does one good to meet an apostle in the flesh."

"Not an extra religious man myself," said Mr. Slyde; "but deep respect for the man, apart from his cloth. Black his boots any day, and feel proud to do it, by Jove!"

Breakfast concluded, there were certain military duties to be observed, at the conclusion of which the lieutenant made his way to headquarters, hoping for an interview with this heroic personage. To his regret, he found that, with characteristic rapidity of action, he had already departed, but had found time

to write hastily the note which was now handed to him. It ran as follows:—

"MY DEAR YOUNG FRIEND (if I may so address you),

"You can hardly imagine the mingled feelings which your presence in this camp called up. Your county adjoins mine, and I have heard of your family ever since I can remember. Knowing its position, I can hardly imagine what could have brought about your departure from the land we all hold so dear.

"Mine was a call, imperative and irresistible. I could not refuse to perform my Master's work. I should have, perhaps, been unduly puffed up by the success of my previous efforts, had not this disastrous war come to lower my pride. I have been chastened, God only knows how severely. May it be for my soul's good! You are in the ranks of those who are fighting—some in defence of a policy of injustice; others, like yourself, I feel certain, merely as a protest against the domination of a savage race—in defence of the hearths and homes which a victorious foe would desecrate. Of the inception of the war you and your friend, Mr. Slyde, I know, are innocent.

"Among our native allies, the Ngapuhi and the Rarawa tribes have ever been true and faithful. The chiefs Waka Nene and Patuone, in their steadfast adherence to the Christian faith and unswerving loyalty to our Queen, may well serve as examples to men in high position. Farewell! and may He who is able to save both body and soul, preserve you through all dangers, now and evermore.

"Believe me to be

"Most truly yours,

"G. A. NEW ZEALAND."

"We shall meet again," thought the recipient of the apostolic epistle—"we *must* do so, with leisure to hear his opinion on this most vexed question of the war. I wish with all my heart that it *was* over. But a peace would be worse than nothing unless we fully proved our superiority. These Waikatos and Ngatihaua must not be suffered to think that they have repulsed the whole British army. The country would be impossible to *live* in. And we can't afford to lose such a brace of islands as these, the nearest approach, in climate, soil, and adaptation to the British race, of any land yet occupied. Not to be thought of."

And here he began to hum a song in which the glories of Britain on land and sea were set forth, and for the moment forgot his virtuous indignation against the occupation of Taharaimaka and the injustice of the Waitara business.

And so the war progressed, sometimes with passages of toilsome marching, daring attack of pah or redoubt, hairbreadth escapes, wounds, and inevitable incidents of warfare. Ever and anon a brilliant surprise, a masterly manœuvre on the part of the troops or allies, followed by an ambuscade planned by the natives with consummate skill, or a desperate stand in their entrenchments, where the loss of officers was unduly great, and the rank and file suffered severely. When it was considered that nearly three years had elapsed in a campaign where ten thousand British regulars, and nearly as many volunteers and native allies, were arrayed against the Maoris, who at no time could have had five thousand men in the field, it seemed amazing that no decisive victory should have been obtained.

"Talk of its being 'one of Britain's little wars,' as the newspapers call it!" grumbled Mr. Slyde. "My belief is that it is going to last as long as that confounded Carthaginian business. How they used to bore us with it at school! Beginning bad enough —end probably worse. Fellows die of old age, unless we hurry up."

"It does drag fearfully; it's only bearable when we're in action. This lagging guerilla business, with such a commissariat—all the privations of war, and none of the excitement—is simply unendurable. However, when Warwick comes in from his scouting prowl we may hear something."

"Wonder he doesn't get 'chopped' some of these fine days. Certainly manages to pick up information in a wonderful way. Von Tempsky says he's thrown away upon us two. Wants to get him for scout business pure and simple."

"For some inscrutable reason he has attached himself to me," said Massinger. "I suggested that he might do good service by acting in that capacity —alone. He didn't take kindly to it at all—seemed hurt; so I let him alone."

"Best thing you could do. Not a bad thing to have a *fidus Achates* born a Trojan. Put you up to their wiles. Shouldn't wonder if he'd given you a hand as it is?"

"Now I come to think of it, he *did* once. We were having some brisk work that day at Katikara, where we couldn't dislodge the natives from the redoubt. The firing was sharp, when he motioned me to change position. The next minute a bullet struck the tree just where I had been standing, and

a fellow put his head over the parapet to see if he had bagged me. Warwick was waiting for him, and as he fired I saw my friend fling up his arms and fall backward."

"'Close call!' as the backwoodsmen say; but that sort of thing's all luck. Look at Ropata! You'd think he stood up on purpose to be shot at—shilling a shot kind of business. Never been touched yet. No wonder they call him 'Waha Waha.' 'The devil or some untoward saint' has an eye to him, the Tohungas say."

"He's a grand soldier. It's lucky for us that he's on our side. Reckless and ruthless, a true Ngatiporou.—Hallo! what tribe do you belong to?" continued he, as he pointed to a tall Maori standing within a few paces of them. "Why, it's Warwick! How in the world did you get so close to us without our hearing you?"

"Only in the way some Waikato will sneak *you*, lieutenant, if you are not more careful—when you'll be shot before you have time to lift your hand. My native relatives taught me that and other things when I was young."

"And what news have you? Anything important?"

"That's as it may be. Large bodies of the Ngaiterangi have commenced to move forward towards the Orakau. We shall have a big affair soon. I fell in with a scout of the Arawa named Taranui, and he was of the same way of thinking. Said the Ngaiterangi were closing up. But I must deliver my report at headquarters first."

Whereupon Warwick departed. He had divested

himself of his European garments, and was attired chiefly in a flax mat (*pureke*), a *tapona* (war-cloak), and other strictly Maori habiliments, with a *heitiki* suspended from his neck; his muscular arms and lower leg were bare. He looked so like a native that only by close inspection could he be detected.

"The gods be praised!" said Mr. Slyde, fervently. "Men getting mouldy here. Another month or two like this would demoralize them. Out of hand a trifle already. Look at Warwick! Doesn't he glide along, at that half run, half walk of the natives? At this distance no one would take him for a white man. Have all the news when he comes to supper."

With this hope before them, the friends addressed themselves to such occupations as were available, and awaited the evening meal, when Warwick would have an opportunity of unloading his budget. When the bugle-call sounded the welcome invitation, they descried him lounging down from the other end of the camp in undress uniform, having taken the opportunity to remove every trace of his recent experiences.

"And now for your adventures, Warwick," said Massinger, as, having settled to the after-supper pipe, the little party seated themselves on a rude bench constructed of fern stems some ten feet in length, and supported on blocks of the pahautea. "It doesn't happen to rain now, wonderful to relate, and the moon, taking heart and encouragement, 'diffuses her mild rays,' as the poets say, through this ancient and darksome woodland. Did you see any of the Ngaiterangi?"

"I did indeed, nearer than I liked," answered Warwick; "and but for a lucky chance they would

have seen me, in which case *you* would never have seen me again—alive that is."

"Thrilling in the extreme," assented Mr. Slyde. "What was it—a *taua?*"

"More than that; a whole *hapu*—a strong one too, women and all. They were travelling fast, and heading straight for Kihi-kihi."

"How far off were you?"

"Barely sixty yards. What saved me was that I was in the bed of a creek, among the ferns on the edge of the water. I had just been going to climb to the top, when I heard a girl laugh. I could scarcely believe my ears. However, I crawled up and peeped through the manuka. Sure enough, there they were, three hundred strong, besides women and children—marching in close order, too. If they had straggled at all I was a gone man."

"So they didn't see you?"

"No. What saved me was a bend in the creek, which they had crossed higher up; so they steered for the other point which they could see—there are some rocks on the bank—and left me in the loop of the circle. If they had struck the creek nearer to me, I must have been seen. But they had camped at the other point, and having had their *kai*, were marching to recover the time. I was very glad when I saw their backs."

"How long would they be in reaching Kihi-kihi?"

"Not before to-morrow night. Their intention is, of course, to get into Orakau and strengthen the defences. There's only a sufficient number there now to hold the earthworks against a moderate force."

"What do you think the general will do?"

"Move to intercept them before they can get into the pah."

"And is there time for the march?"

"Barely. Don't be surprised if we have the order to start at daylight. I went back on their trail for the rest of that day, and found that they had only made one halt, having come right through from Maunga-tautari. Just at nightfall I picked up the tracks of Taranui, and got to his camp, in a cave that I knew all about."

"Then you compared notes?"

"Yes. He says it will be the biggest fight of the war; that Waka Nene and Patuone were on the march, with every warrior of the Ngapuhi and the Rarawa. Mannering and Waterton were with them, also Erena. Taranui said she never leaves her father. There were many other women, which makes me think that it is a more serious affair than usual."

"Why should that be?" asked Massinger, heroically concealing his personal interest in this phase of the expedition.

"Because they do not care to leave them at home. They have a notion that in case of defeat the Waikatos might double back and raid their villages."

"What an absurd idea! Surely they can't imagine that, with the forces at our command, such a thing could be possible!"

"Such things *have* happened in old days," said Slyde. "Defeated tribe suffered horrors unspeakable. Ngapuhis felt no hesitation in inflicting when they were uppermost. Tribal custom. No grounds of complaint if they receive same in turn."

"Fortunately, there's no slavery now; otherwise,"

said Warwick, "one could hardly describe the condition of a conquered tribe. The missionaries may be thanked for that. I have heard tales that would make your hair stand on end."

"Much worse than could happen now?" asked Massinger.

"Worse—worse a hundredfold. First of all, the old and helpless would be killed and eaten—yes, *eaten* before their blood was cold. Any particular family among the captors that had lost relatives would have men or women handed over to them to torture at their pleasure; and great pleasure it seemed to be to prolong the agony and refine the cruelty. All the able-bodied men and women would be carried off as slaves—not only to be used as beasts of burden, but to be held degraded for life as having been slaves. Their lot was a hard one, though occasionally some lived through it, and were now and then freed. Others became distinguished, like Te Waharoa."

"I have heard his history," said Massinger. "What a remarkable man he must have been!"

"He was indeed. Found crying, a small child, among the ruins of his pah at Wanganui, and carried away to Rotorua by Pango, a chief of the Ngati-whakane, who in after-years piously repented (in 1836) that he had not there and then ended the life of one fated to become the destroyer of his tribe. It did seem ungrateful when he, forty years afterwards, declared war against the tribe that had liberated him, and slaughtered them wholesale at Ohinemutu.

* * * * * *

Sleep did not appear to be likely to visit Massinger after what he had heard from Warwick. Long after

his comrades had retired he remained on watch, gazing into the forest, as if he expected the Ngapuhi to debouch thence, with Mannering and Waterton at the head of their warriors, and Erena beside her father, a warrior-maid too proud to remain behind when the great Ngapuhi tribe was on the war-path.

What would be the fate of this strange girl, so subtly compounded of diverse elements, the twin natures within her—the forest life and the civilized —each struggling for the mastery?

And what were his feelings now with respect to her? Could he deny that her image was constantly in his thoughts; that the recollection of her haughty, graceful bearing, her superb form, her lustrous eyes, her radiant smile, combined to form a picture dangerously enthralling? From one fateful syren, so destructive to his peace, his every aim and prospect in life, he had been removed. And now, must a newer "phantom of delight" reappear to disturb his faculties and assail his reason? Whatever might be the result, one thing was certain—his heart swelled with unwonted emotion at the thought of seeing her again.

And under what circumstances were they once more to meet? Not under the fern-arched glades of that enchanted forest, wherein they had wandered side by side so many a mile, carelessly gay as the bird that called above them, looking forward but to the halt by rushing stream or fire-lit camp, amid the silent splendours of the antarctic night. He had thought to regard this fantastic friendship as one of the inevitable episodes of a roving life, productive, doubtless, of a transient series of pleasurable emotions and interesting experiences, but to be disengaged from

his career when serious action was demanded, like the drifting weeds and flowers that for a time impede the flowing tide.

How many men have so judged! How many have discovered that the fragile bonds, to be cast aside as pleasure or interest might dictate, have changed mysteriously into shackles and fetters that hold with inflexible tenacity a long life through?

But who thus argues in the halycon days of youthful dalliance, when reason is stilled, and every natural feeling exults in joyous possession of the magical hours? The sky is blue and golden, the birds sing, strains of unearthly melody float through the charmed air—immortal, enthralling. Care is defied, sorrow banished. The "vengeance due for all our wrongs" is immeasurably distant. Yet Nemesis —slow-footed sleuth-hound of Fate—is rarely evaded.

A train of depressing reflections may probably have arisen in his midnight musings, not wholly to be disregarded, sanguine as was his nature. But he comforted himself as a last resource with the idea that there was a chance of his being knocked over in the coming engagement, which promised to be of a yet more bloody and obstinate nature than those in which he had already taken part. Having thus arrived at some sort of a conclusion, if not wholly satisfactory, he disposed himself to a slumber from which the bugle-notes of the reveillé only aroused him.

The march had been arranged on the calculation that they would reach Orakau, where the enemy would in all probability join the hostile forces in sufficient time to intercept them, and so destroy the strength of the combination. The order of the day, therefore,

required a continuous march until sundown, after which a halt for refreshment would take place.

The troops would then continue the advance until daylight under the guidance of trusted scouts, of whom Warwick was the leader and interpreter. They would then, it was hoped, be enabled to fall upon the Ngaiterangi unprepared, and deal one of the most decisive blows of the war, besides capturing the Orakau pah, a stronghold of great strength in itself, and the key to a most important position. Artillery, too, would be brought to bear on the pah for breaching purposes. The full strength of the Ngapuhi and Rarawa would also be available. All things looked like an assured victory.

CHAPTER XIII

WHILE in one hemisphere Roland Massinger was revolving these momentous questions concerning love, duty, happiness, in this world and the next, Hypatia Tollemache was considering almost equally important decisions at the other end of the world.

Her range of thought and feeling was by no means so comprehensive as his, inasmuch as, by adhering to the strict line of duty embodied in altruistic sacrifice, she had considerably narrowed the field of argument. She had definitely abandoned the idea of "slum missionary" effort, having discovered by experience what had been previously suggested to her, that there is an unpleasant, even undesirable, side to these ministrations when the evangelist is a young and handsome woman.

She saw clearly that there were many worthy labourers in that vineyard who, possessing equal zeal, did not suffer from such disqualifications. The illness which she had contracted when weakened by overwork, possibly through infection, had chilled her enthusiasm, perhaps caused her to doubt the expediency of her mission.

She was on the point of reviewing the respective

conditions of missionary life in China and Hindostan, where the Zenana offered so fair a field for reformation by cultured sisterhoods, when she received a letter from her friend Mary Summers, the interpretation of which was, to Hypatia's sympathetic spirit, "Come over and help us."

With Mary Summers she had long since formed a close friendship. They had corresponded regularly since her departure to New Zealand as the wife of the Reverend Cyril Summers. He had been a *protégé* of Bishop Selwyn, and, as a curate, a favourite attendant during the long, quasi-dangerous journeys in which the soul of that latter-day apostle delighted.

As often happens in friendships, and even closer intimacies, the schoolfellows were strongly contrasted in appearance and disposition. The one was tall and fair, with grey-blue eyes, which could flash on occasion. An air of hauteur, chastened by philosophic self-repression, distinguished her. The other was scarce of middle height, with a *petite* but perfect figure, dark hair, and wistful hazel eyes.

Hypatia was impetuous, disdainful of obstacles, hating the expedient, and scorning danger. Mary was persuasive, self-effacing, soft of speech and manner, of a goodness so pervading that it seemed an impertinence to praise it. Many people were strengthened in their convictions as to a future state by the belief that any such scheme must include a heaven for Mary Summers.

She and her husband had encountered trials and privations, borne unflinchingly. They had reached a moderate degree of success, and, so to speak, prosperity, having come to inhabit a comfortable cottage near

Tauranga, when this lamentable war bade fair to ruin everything, destroying the work of years, and even endangering their safety.

The epistle which decided Hypatia as to locality ran as follows:—

"My dearest Hypatia,

"Wars and alarms still prevail, I grieve to say. The colonists are determined, and the natives desperate, each race fighting as if for existence. Blood has been shed on either side, so that all hope of peace or mediation is at an end. I do not give any opinion as to the policy of the Government. My husband believes that an act of injustice provoked the contest which led to the war. The side on which the fault lay has a heavy account to settle. But now all agree that unless the natives make unconditional submission there is no hope of peace.

"And how terrible are the consequences! It is positively heartbreaking to see the dispersion of native schools, the empty churches, and to hear of promising pupils and converts in the ranks of the enemy—though they have not unlearned, poor things, all that we have been at such pains to teach them. Continually we hear of acts of humanity performed by them while fighting bravely in their own ranks. Poor Henare Taratoa went under fire to fetch water for a wounded soldier in the trenches at the Gate Pah. He himself was killed soon afterwards at Orakau.

"It is affecting to hear, as we did, from a man in active service, of their reading the lessons of the day and singing their psalms in the intervals of the hottest fighting.

"These were once our *friendly* natives, many of whom we know well by name. They will not fight on Sunday, or break the Sabbath in any way, which is more than our troops can say. Though at times downhearted and anxious, Cyril and I feel that we have enjoyed a high privilege in doing our Master's work.

"As to position, we are certainly not too far from the seat of war, but Cyril says they have not as yet harmed any of the missionaries. Outlying settlers have been murdered, and one poor family—but I cannot bear to think of the details.

"We are in God's hands. So far we have been shielded from evil. We are steadfast in faith and trust in the power of our Redeemer. The children and Cyril are well. If only I were a little stronger, and servants were not things of the past, I should be *nearly* quite happy. Always (in peace or war)

"Your devoted friend,

"MARY SUMMERS."

"Poor dear Mary! Nearly *quite* happy indeed! Just like her to think of every one but herself. 'If she were only a little stronger!' No servant, too; and here am I, Hypatia Tollemache, as strong as ever I was, now that I have got over that horrid fever; safe, protected, in luxury even, only disturbed by the thought of where I shall betake myself with my gifts and endowments (such as they are), and all uncertain of what good I shall do when I get there. From 'India to the Pole' seems prophetic. I was nearly going to India; now shall I go to the 'Pole'? Yes, I am resolved. Writing to and condoling with poor dear Mary will be saying in effect,

'Be ye warmed and fed'—the lowest hypocrisy of all, it always seemed to me. I am determined—that is to say, I have fully made up my mind. I will go out and help poor Mary, the Reverend Cyril, and the dear children, besides taking my turn with the heathen, unless they bring their tomahawks to church. It will be a charity worthy of the name. There can be no mortal doubt about that. As for the danger, do they not share it? So can I. *That* never put me off anything, I can safely say. I shall write to Mary *when* I have taken my passage—not before."

So fixed in the resolve to offer up herself on the altar of friendship, duty, and danger delightfully combined was this latter-day damsel, that she went off to London, and, having no parents or near relatives to control her—only a couple of trustees, who, provided she did not spend more than her income, permitted her to do pretty well as she pleased—took her passage to New Zealand by the very next boat, the *Arawatta*. The said trustees raised their eyebrows when informed of her intention, but consoled themselves, being men of sense and experience, remarking that if young women of independent means and ideas did not do one foolish thing they would be sure to do another, even perhaps less desirable. So, the decisive step being taken, she had only to tell a few friends—Mrs. Merivale, *née* Branksome, being one—and get ready a suitable outfit for the voyage to this Ultima Thule of Maoriland.

Up to this time, though hard knocks, hard fare, and hard marches had convinced Massinger that volunteer soldiering in Northern New Zealand was no child's play, yet, on the whole, the experience had

been less depressing than exciting. The health of the triumvirate was unimpaired. The youth and uniformly good spirits of Massinger had served him well. Mr. Slyde's pessimistic philosophy had much the same effect, apparently, leading him to assert that "nothing mattered one way or another in this infernal country; that all things being as bad as they could be, any change would probably be for the better; that if they were killed in action, as seemed highly probable, it would be perhaps the best and quickest way out of the hopeless muddle into which the Governor, the ministers, the settlers, and the soldiers had got the cursed country. The alternative was, of course, to desert, which, for absurdly conventional reasons, could not be thought of. His advice to Massinger was to marry Erena Mannering and join the Ngapuhi tribe, which, under Waka Nene's sagacious policy, was bound to come out on top. That would be, at any rate, a decided policy, such as no party in the island had sufficient intellect to grasp. He might then give all his support to the King movement, and possibly in course of time be elected Sovereign of Waikato and surrounding states, do the Rajah Brooke business, and found an Anglo-Maori dynasty."

These and similar suggestions, delivered with an air of earnestness, and the slow persuasive tones which marked his ordinary conversation, never failed to produce a chorus of merriment, in effective contrast to the unrelaxing gravity of his expression.

As for Warwick, the war-demon which had possessed his Maori ancestors had temporarily taken up its abode with him, for, as the campaign progressed,

he seemed day by day to be more resolute and unflinching, in action or out of it.

"Seems to me," said Mr. Slyde, as they commenced their march in the discouraging dawn of a dismally damp day, "we're in for a deucedly hot picnic. Colonel been blocked two or three times in his advance; made up his mind to go for this Orakau pah, spite of all odds. Hope he won't start before he's ready. Pluck and obstinacy fine things in their place, but the waiting business pays best with Tangata Maori. Devilish cool hand at the game himself."

"How about our artillery?" asked his friend.

"Not weight enough, fellows say. Guns always beastly bother to transport. See when we get there."

* * * * * *

Another scout had just come in with the news that Pate-rangi had been abandoned, and that Brigadier-General Carey was in force at Awa-mutu. The Ngati-maniapoto had crossed the Puniu river, and at Orakau one of the chiefs had shouted out, "This is my father's land; here will I fight." Rifle-pits were formed, and a determined stand was resolved upon. Before the position, however, could be strongly fortified, three hundred men of the 40th Regiment had been sent to occupy the rear. At three o'clock next morning a force of seven hundred men, artillery and engineers, the 40th and 60th Regiments, marched past the Kihi-kihi redoubt, picking up a hundred and fifty men from it on the way. The Waikato, the 65th and 3rd Militia, with a hundred men, moved up from Rangi-ohia to the east side. At day-dawn thirteen hundred rank and file had converged upon Orakau, strengthened by a contingent of the Forest

Rangers, among whom were Messrs. Massinger, Slyde, and Warwick, expectant of glory, and by no means uncertain as to taking part in one of the most stubborn engagements they had as yet encountered. The defenders of Orakau numbered under four hundred, inclusive of women and children.

"There goes the big gun from the south-west ridge," said Slyde. "It ought to make the splinters fly. A breach is only a matter of time."

"Yes, but what time?" asked Warwick. "I don't know Rewi, if he hasn't blinded the outer lines with fern-bundles tied with flax. It's wonderful how they will stop a cannon-ball. Yes, I thought so. No making for a breach just yet."

"They can't have any food or water to speak of," said Slyde. "Have to give in if we wait."

"True enough; they're short of water, and have only potatoes and gourds, I hear," said Warwick. "But Maoris can live upon little, and fight upon nothing at all."

"There goes Captain King and the advanced guard," said Slyde.

"Too soon—too soon!" said Warwick. "There's a devilish deep ditch, besides earthworks and timber. Ha! there the Maori speaks. The troops have made a rush; they're driven back. The reinforcement comes up. Another assault. My God! Captain King's down—badly wounded, I know. See, Captain Baker has dismounted, and calls for volunteers. Rangers to the front! Hurrah!"

And like one man, the little band joined the 18th. But though the assault was made with desperate courage, the close fire again forced them

to retire with a heavy loss. No breach had as yet been made, while the fire from behind the earthworks was incessant and accurate.

Seeing that it was not a case for a cheer and a bayonet rush, the general decided to take the place by sap.

"Might have thought of that before," growled Mr. Slyde, "and saved my hat." Here he pointed to a bullet-hole in his headpiece with so rueful a face that his smoke-begrimed comrades burst out laughing. "Are *you* hit, Warwick?"

"Only a graze," replied he, feeling his right arm, from which the blood had stained his sleeve. "I was afraid the bone was touched. It's all right."

"Here come those Maunga-tautari fellows," said Warwick, pointing to a compact body of natives now appearing on the scene. "Ha! you may fire a volley and dance the war-dance, my fine fellows; you're out of this game. There goes a shell among them. How they scatter! Too late for this play."

So it proved. Within the next twenty-four hours a British reinforcement, four hundred strong, appeared. The sap had been carried on; none could escape. Another day, another night, passed. At length, about noon, an Armstrong gun was carried into the sap, a breach was made, and the siege was virtually over.

On the score of humanity, women and children being in the pah, the garrison was called upon to surrender, with a promise that their lives should be spared.

Now was heard the immortal rejoinder: "Ka whai-whai, tonu—aké—aké—aké!" ("We will fight on to the end—for ever—for ever—for ever!")

The interpreter pleaded for the women and children. "Why not send them out?"

The answer came back: "Our women will fight also."

But they commenced to find the rifle-pits untenable. The hand-grenades made terrific slaughter. The rifle-pits had been too hastily formed for safety; but still they fought stubbornly on.

When the assault was made, half of the first troops that entered fell; nor was the second assault more fortunate. Then the enemy's ammunition failed. It was pathetic to note them in their deep despair. Standing amid their dead and dying, the blood-stained warriors sang a mission hymn of old days, and raised their voices—which were plainly heard—in passionate supplication to the Christian's God.

"But there was no voice, nor any that answered." Still pressed nearer, with hail of shot and shell, the resistless pakeha. Once again their mood changed, and they turned to the heathen gods of the children of Maui. Chanting an ancient *karakia*, or imprecation, they marched forth in a solid column. The women and children, with the high chiefs, were placed in the centre.

An opening had been made in the ranks to enable the heavy gun to open fire. Through this, in the full light of the afternoon sun, the unconquered garrison marched out steadily, as if going to church in the peaceful days of missionary rule. Rewi ordered that no shot should be fired. The scanty ammunition would be all needed for the marsh passage, on the route to the Puniu river.

Like the Moorish monarch giving his last sigh to

the glories of the Alhambra and the snow-crowned Sierras, did Rewi cast a lingering look on his ancestral possessions? Eastward frowned Maunga-tautari, on the flank of the great Waikato plain. Pirongi on the west held watch and ward over the Waipu. Kihi-kihi, his own settlement, was in the hands of the pakeha. But, the Puniu once crossed, there was refuge in the forests of Rangi-toto.

The marsh was reached, though many fell before the converging fire of the troops. The cavalry intercepted them at the neck. Many were thus slain; but, in spite of all losses, the main body gained the Puniu river and escaped, after a pursuit lasting over six miles.

Orakau had fallen; of the garrison, nearly one half lay dead around the pah or on the Puniu river trail. How stubborn a fight had they made for three days and two nights against fearful odds, short as they became of food, water, and ammunition! The sap had reached the last ditch. Even then they did not despair. They might die, but would not yield. Maunga-tautari was abandoned. Rewi's warriors were scattered. It was the Maori Flodden; and the crossing of the Puniu was akin to that of the historic river, immortalized in the verse of the Magician of the North—

> "Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
> As many a broken band,
> Disordered through her currents dash,
> To gain the Scottish land."

"This Orakau business should finish up the infernal war, any one would think," said Mr. Slyde on

the following morning, when, after a decent night's rest, a complete personal renovation, and a breakfast, much assisted by the arrival of fresh supplies, he and Massinger were cleaning their accoutrements.

"But surely it *will* end it," replied Massinger, with an air of conviction. "More than a hundred natives were found dead. It is almost certain that fifty more were either killed or mortally wounded. The rest are scattered. They will never be so mad as to tackle the troops we can bring against them now, engineers and artillery too, besides the volunteers and friendlies."

"Any other country, any other people, quite so," assented Mr. Slyde, in a tone of philosophical argument; "but Maoris devils incarnate when their blood is up. Remember what Tutakaro said, chaffed with fighting against us once and for us afterwards?"

"No. I saw the man, though—fine, powerful youngster."

"Beggar coolly replied, 'What matter? Fighting is fighting: if we young fellows can get a share of it, don't much care which side we go for.'"

"And did he go well for us?"

"Of course he did. Killed a chief. Shot through the arm, too. Tied it up and blazed away till the affair was over."

"What a splendid mercenary soldier he would have made in the Middle Ages! Is he with us now?"

"Yes. Very nearly got Rewi, as he was crossing the mound. Strictly impartial."

"And a most pathetic sight it was" said Massinger, "when they were crossing the mound at the other side of the swamp. I saw the column file by—men,

women, and children, all as serious as a funeral, and as cool as if they were going to market. I hadn't the heart to fire another shot. Every now and then I could hear a woman's voice—not complaining, far from it—urging on the men to keep going and to shoot when they saw a chance."

"Warwick says *you* had a close shave. So much for not minding your business. Thinking about Erena Mannering. Soldiers no right to have feelings. Harass the enemy, sink, burn, kill, destroy. Navy regulations; army too."

"Certainly a bullet *did* hit the tree I was leaning against, close to my head. Queer thing, too; it came from the *friendly* side. I distinctly saw the smoke from the bush, where our natives were."

"You must have been in the line of fire."

"Nothing of the sort. It was a side shot."

"Any one cherishing ill feeling that you know of?"

"Well—no. Now I come to think, there was an ill-looking dog of a Ngapuhi with us at Rotorua, that was turned out of the party by me and bullied by the chief. His name was Ngarara."

"Wh—ew! I've heard the reptile's name before. Cousin or something of your Zenobia — admirer probably. Acute attack jealousy."

"Might have been. After he went I didn't trouble my head about him. I had a great mind to give him a thrashing, but Warwick said it might cause trouble."

"And so at any time he may take a steady pot-shot at you; probably did. 'Keep your eye skinned,' as that Yankee said. Set Warwick at him. By the way, wonder how he is? Shot through the shoulder yesterday. No bone hit. Doctor says all right directly.

Lay up for a week. Painful all the same. Suppose we look him up?"

When our friends were comforting themselves with the belief that perhaps the dragging and unsatisfactory war was near its termination, how little they were aware of the decisive engagement ahead of them—the very next in succession, as it turned out, when the 43rd was fated to lose more officers than any of the regiments engaged at Waterloo! A crushing repulse, followed by a disastrous rout and the death of their gallant colonel! With what indignation would they have repelled such a suggestion! It was destined to come to pass, nevertheless. That two of the speakers would be dangerously wounded, and the other at death's door—"reported missing," besides? Long was it before the soldiers of the gallant regiment, which had won glory on many a bloody field, could endure an allusion to the Gate Pah, a name which always brought up memories of bitter grief and shame intolerable. It was a case of "threes about"—those simple, apparently meaningless words, spoken by chance or otherwise—which clouded the well-earned fame of a gallant cavalry regiment in India, and caused the death of their colonel by his own hand. And in the memorable disaster at the Gate Pah, in the moment of victory, it is alleged that the ominous word, to a British ear, of "Retreat!" was distinctly heard.

Orakau fight was over. The dead were buried. The women were still mingling blood with their tears for those who would never more defy the pakeha or their hereditary enemies. But the national war-spirit was alive and redly glowing.

Many of the Ngaiterangi and other natives had gone from Hawkes Bay to Tauranga, indignant at the blockade of the coast. Major Whitmore, as a counter-stroke, raised a contingent from among the friendly natives, confident of their willingness to fight anybody and anywhere. His opinion did not long lack confirmation.

The Ngaiterangi speedily changed position, building a strong pah at Puke-hina-hina, long afterwards memorable as the Gate Pah, so named from its peculiar situation on a narrow ridge with a swamp at each end. It was about three miles from the mission station at Tauranga. Here the insurgents proposed to await the attack. Not unused to the rules of war, they sent a protocol (March 28) to the colonel in command, announcing that unarmed persons, or even soldiers who turned the butt of their muskets or the hilt of their swords to the enemy, would be spared. This resolve was fated to stand them in good stead.

On the 21st of April, General Cameron transferred his headquarters to Tauranga.

"'Quem Jupiter vult perdere dementat prius,'" spouted Massinger, who saw an opening for a classical quotation as, soon after daybreak on the 29th, the guns and mortars, placed in position overnight, opened fire in front. "What possible chance do they think they have against a park of artillery and nearly two thousand men?"

"'Let not him that putteth on his armour, et-cetera,'" returned Slyde. "If I were anything but a thick-witted Englishman, I should say, don't like the look of things. Maoris too d——d quiet. Bad sign.

See that fellow coolly shovelling up earth to fill a hole."

Warwick, whose wound was presumably paining him, but who defied the surgeon to keep him in the hospital, said nothing. Afterwards brightening up, he began in his usual cool way to discuss the situation.

"We've got guns enough *this* time to pound them to bits, and men enough to eat them, but they'll make a fight of it, and a stiff one. That redoubt's an artful piece of work, and the line of rifle-pits between it and the swamp is well placed. More than the flagstaff is—for *us*, I mean. I believe it's ever so far in the rear to draw the fire. That's an old dodge of theirs. However, there must be a breach in the afternoon."

"I should say before that; the firing's very accurate," said Massinger. "And that Armstrong six-pounder is enfilading their left."

"After lunch, if we get any," quoth Slyde.

Whatever "stomach for the fight" the men told off for the assault had, the ration served out to the Forest Rangers, who were notified for that service, along with a hundred and fifty sailors and marines and the same number of the 43rd, was discussed with appetite. A reserve of three hundred men, under Captain Hamilton of H.M.S. *Esk*, formed the reserve.

> "The cannon's loud-mouthed summons ceased,
> A rocket signal soared on high."

The assault was on.

Colonel Booth and Commander Hay led the way into the inner trench, where no enemy was to be seen. But from earth-covered pits and passages poured forth a volley, under which officers and men

fell rapidly. Still the crowd of assailants pressed on, only to be shot down as they entered the fatal death-trap. The reserve joined, with headlong rush, in support of their comrades—all vainly, as it seemed. The officers of both services continued to drop, but the ranks closed up—

> "Each stepping where his comrade stood,
> The instant that he fell."

Captain Hamilton fell in his place when leading the reserve. Colonel Booth and Commander Hay had fallen before. Captains Hamilton, Glover, Mure, Utterton, and two lieutenants, *all of the 43rd*, were shot dead or mortally wounded, as also Captain Glover's brother, whom he tried to carry off. The front ranks of the storming party were annihilated.

In a very few minutes every officer of the column was either dead or wounded. Among the latter were Slyde and Warwick. They had gone down along with the officers of the 43rd. When they awoke to consciousness it was dark, and their comrade Massinger was nowhere to be seen or heard.

Stunned and panic-stricken, deprived of their officers, the men had broken and fled—in such headlong haste that they took no advantage of the ground. On the open surface of the ridge, many were shot. No one could account for the disaster. Some said that the word "Retreat" was heard and acted upon; others, that the main body of the natives had rushed to the rear, and being met by the 68th Regiment posted there, recoiled, and dashing back to sell their lives dearly, were mistaken by the soldiers for a Maori reinforcement. Then the Maori warriors turned to the work of slaughter. Rawiri

leaped on to the parapet as he fired, taunting the soldiery and inviting them to renew the fight. As the day declined, the garrison made a determined rush to the right wing of the pah. During the darkness of the night they stole away in small parties. They passed silently through the fern, or by the right rear, leaving (and this was most exceptional) their dead and wounded behind them.

In the garrison fought all day Henare Taratoa, educated under Bishop Selwyn at St. John's College before 1853. He tended one of the wounded, who in his dying agonies thirsted for a drop of water. The Maoris had none. Taratoa threaded his way through the English sentries in the darkness, and returned with a calabash of water to slake his enemy's thirst. More than that. By the side of each wounded Englishman was found in the morning some small water-vessel, placed there by the Maoris before they deserted the fort.

Colonel Booth was carried out of the pah in the morning. The general went to him, but the gallant soldier felt the repulse so deeply that he turned away his face, saying, "General, I can't look at you. I tried to carry out your orders, but we failed." He died that evening.

The tameless islanders were not minded to give up all for lost, even now. By one great effort they might force back the invader, or possibly combine the tribes against him. At any rate, in the quasi-victory of the Gate Pah they had obtained *utu* for the death of many a warrior, many a chief. But, even now, the tribes were unbeaten. News came to Colonel Greer from the Maori allies that yet another pah at Te

Ranga was rising, a few miles from the scene of the recent conflict.

Slyde and Warwick, severely though not dangerously wounded, were both in hospital, precluded from participation in the closing engagement, which they deeply regretted. Lieutenant Massinger reported missing.

"Hard lines," said the former, raising himself with difficulty from his stretcher, "not to have a throw in at the finish. I feel convinced this must snuff the beggars out. The colonel will at them before they have time to do much. Friendlies in great heart. The 43rd die to a man or wipe out their defeat."

"Yes," said Warwick, "I believe their hour is come. How grieved Massinger will be that he is out of it! However, he may think himself lucky to escape with his life."

"You think he has, then?" said Slyde.

"He was all right when I saw him last, waving his sword, shoulder to shoulder with Von Tempsky, who was doing his best to rally the troops. Then I went down. Saw nothing more. I had a crack with the butt end of a tomahawk also. I have no doubt that he is with Mannering's *hapu*, most likely with Erena looking after him."

"In that case he's all right," said Slyde. "Maori women great nurses, always heard."

"They've got a *tohunga* in the tribe," continued Warwick, "the natives say, can cure any man that's not actually buried—bring him to life, they believe. Between him and Erena we'll see him back in Auckland all right."

* * * * * *

Colonel Greer made no delay at Te Ranga. He marched at once with six hundred men, enfiladed

the enemy from a spur which commanded their right; drove in their skirmishers and kept up a sharp fire for two hours. Then, reinforced by a gun and two hundred additional men, the advance was sounded.

Short work was made of the assault. The 43rd and 68th, with the 1st Waikato, carried the rifle-pits with a rush. For a short space the natives fought desperately, then turned and fled, leaving sixty-eight men dead in the rifle-pits. The pursuit was keen. The 43rd avenged their losses at the Gate Pah. One hundred and ten Maoris were killed, twenty wounded, and ten made prisoners. Henare Taratoa lay among the dead. On his body was found a written order of the day. It began with prayer, and ended with the words, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink."

Three stubbornly contested engagements had broken the Maori power. In them they lost their bravest warriors and nearly all their leading chiefs. They had no option but to yield. On the 5th of August the Governor, Sir George Grey, with General Cameron, met the assembled tribes. They had previously surrendered their arms to Colonel Greer, they now surrendered their lands; upon which the Governor promised to care for them as the Queen's subjects. He would retain *one-fourth* of their lands as atonement for the rebellion, but would return the remainder in recognition of their humanity throughout the war.

The Waikato tribes had sustained a final and crushing defeat. The flower of their race lay low, were wounded or in prison. They had forfeited their port at Tauranga, their most available outlet for produce. The war was ended.

CHAPTER XIV

MISS TOLLEMACHE had settled down at Oropi to the performance of her daily duties, and, like Massinger, commenced to discover that New Zealand was a most interesting, not to say exciting, place of abode. After completing her portion of the household work, which she gladly took upon herself in order to spare her friend's failing strength, she applied herself diligently to the study of the Maori tongue and the historical records of this newer Britain. The genial climate and regular exercise acted upon her constitution so favourably that she soon attained the fullest measure of health and spirits. Never yet had she felt stronger in mind and body, never yet so eager for opportunity to devote herself to the good work spread so abundantly before her. She was rewarded primarily by noting the gradual improvement of Mrs. Summers' health, and receiving the heartfelt thanks of the Reverend Cyril, who, between domestic troubles, parochial duties, and a natural apprehension of danger to his defenceless household, sorely needed aid and support. Such he found, in addition to intellectual companionship, in the presence of this high-souled, devoted maiden, whom he did not hesitate to say the providence of God had sent to them in their distress.

As a school-friend of his wife's, a closer companionship and more sympathetic intimacy was established than could have been possible with any other inmate. Would but this wretched war end, and a lasting peace be established, he felt as if their future lot might be one of almost unalloyed happiness.

As for Hypatia, her fearless, eager spirit, scornful of obstacles and inglorious ease, rejoiced in the difficulties of the position. After a laborious day's work, during which she astonished the Maori handmaids by the energy which she threw into her household tasks, working in common with them, and eagerly possessing herself of the vernacular, she pored over Maori grammars and dictionaries with an ardour not inferior to that which had secured her the unique academical distinctions of her year. She learned the history, the language, the manners and customs of the singular people among whom she dwelt, with a rapidity which astonished Mr. Summers, and caused him to remark to his wife that he had been wont to consider the scholastic triumphs of her friend somewhat exaggerated, but was happy now to recant and apologize. Never before had he seen a woman in whom were allied extraordinary mental powers with such unflagging industry, steady application with such brilliant conceptions. Sufficiently rare among men, the combination was almost unknown, in his experience, among women students.

"You have left out her beauty and her simplicity of manner, my dear," said his wife, as she smiled up at her husband's earnest face. "You generally remark these attributes first, you know."

"True—most true," he said, relaxing his countenance. "These I had forgotten. They make the

sum-total of high gifts in her case still more surprising. For the most part beauties are neither clever nor studious. Nor are the studious women beautiful. Nature, in a fit of absence of mind, has split the ingredients while fashioning her favourites, and given Miss Tollemache a double allowance of good looks with all the talents."

"Leaving some poor girl high and dry with neither," said Mrs. Summers. "You do see that occasionally. Watch her there; she does not look like the top mathematician of her year."

Nor did she, perhaps, to a superficial eye, as she sat outside the detached building which served as a kitchen, peeling potatoes, or rather scraping them, native fashion, with a shell; afterwards placing them in a wooden vessel shaped like a canoe for future culinary treatment, the while in animated conversation with Miru, a good-humoured, round-faced native girl, whose peals of laughter were evoked from time to time by her wonderful Maori sentences.

"Yes," said Cyril Summers, "there she sits, suitably dressed, yet looking like a society girl at a South Kensington cookery class, perfectly at her ease with Miru, who worships her, and yet doing the work that is set before her thoroughly and efficiently."

"She takes the deepest interest in our converts, too," said Mrs. Summers. "'One ought to prefer our white heathen, of course,' she said to me the other day, 'but I must confess they seem to me unutterably inferior in manners, dignity, and truthfulness to this race. Their ingrained selfishness and coarseness always revolted me, in spite of my sense of duty. Now, these people have all the simplicity and directness of nature.

Such courage, too! What tales we hear from the front of their contempt of danger! They are, or rather have been, cruel; but so have all nations in the barbaric stage. We don't hear of anything but straightforward fighting now, and that is easy to understand when one looks around on this beautiful country.'"

"Yes, indeed. I suppose it must have come sooner or later. Yet when you contrast the old peaceful mode of living—which I used to admire when we first came here, and were not afraid to visit their kaingas—with the present, one cannot but grieve. It was the most perfect embodiment of the fabled Arcadian life that could be imagined. The palisaded pah, at once a fortress and a town, serving the purpose of the feudal castle of the Middle Ages, to which the inhabitants retreated in time of war; the fields and gardens so neatly cultivated, the groups of women and children, the young men and girls of the tribe, the gossip, the laughter, the games and exercises, of which they had a great variety; then our canoe trips on the broad Waikato, or short boat excursions from the coast settlements;—such pictures of natural rural contentment, as superior to the ordinary life of common Europeans as can be conceived."

"But then their wars—cruel and remorseless. Think of Rauparaha and Hongi! Think of the wholesale massacres, the cannibal feasts, the torturings, the burnings!"

"No doubt. All these things were done in their unregenerate days, but after the advent of that great and good man, Marsden, in 1830, and the establishment of missionary stations, these horrors gradually lessened and were in process of dying out."

"How do you think that can be? Were there not still tribal wars and ruthless massacres?"

"A state of conquest, succeeded by retribution, could not be expected to cease suddenly. But you may notice that as the old cannibal chiefs and leaders died out, they in many instances recommended the missionaries to their sons and successors. Then the Christianized chiefs, like Waka Nene and Patuone, never relapsed into heathenism, but fought for us and with us to the end."

"Certainly that showed their power to assimilate civilization, when once introduced."

"Then, again, one remarkable result of the progress of religious teaching was their abolition of slavery. The Maoris were large slaveholders in proportion to their numbers. They made profitable use of captives in agriculture and the laborious work of the tribe. They pleased themselves also by feeling that they had thus degraded their enemies. In the case of chiefs and high-born women it was held to be an unspeakable degradation, personal and political. When one considers the difficulty of inducing civilized nations to forego such privileges, one is lost in amazement that a people but lately redeemed from barbarism should act so humanely at the bidding of a handful of missionaries. It was to forego an ancient institution which contributed so largely to their pride and profit; for slaves were valuable alike in peace and war."

Following up her researches and explorations in Maori lore, Hypatia was daily more excited by the wondrous revelations which the library of fact and fiction furnished. A procession of warriors, orators, poets, priests, and patriots passed before her eager

vision. Conquerors who, like Timour and Zenghis Khan, marched from one extremity of the island world to the other, slaying and enslaving, devouring and torturing, extirpating the weaker tribes—a devastating wave of conquest.

Individuals, again, of such force of character and fixity of resolve that they committed themselves to the hazard of strange vessels, voyaging over unknown seas in order to reach the wondrous isles at the world's end, whence came these strong white strangers, who bore such rich and rare, even terrible commodities, to the children of Maui. Among these strong-souled envoys the historic Hongi, who dissembled successfully, while honoured in the midst of kings and courtiers, until he procured possession of the first firearms, after which he cast away the veneer of civilization, and stood forth a second Attila, the remorseless destroyor of his race. Not less, in peace or war, the warrior and diplomatist, the Napoleon of his time, the terrible Waharoa ; risen from a slave's hard fate and toilsome life through the mistaken lenity of his captors, he exhibited his talents by devastating the lands of neighbouring chiefs, and his gratitude by almost obliterating the tribe which had protected him in youth and set him free to commence his march of doom !

Strange to say, those remorseless despots, red with the blood of their countrymen, and unsparing of the lives of women and children, protected the missionaries. Scorning to change their ancient faith, they yet threw no impediment in the way of their successors becoming Christians in name and faith, or loyal allies of the white strangers.

The names of women, too, this earnest student

found profusely associated with heroic deed and resolve, such as have rendered individuals of the sex celebrated, nay, immortal, since the dawn of history. Parallels were there for all the legendary heroines. In the revival of "Hero and Leander," it was the Maori maiden, and not the lover, who dared the peril of the midnight wave, and, more fortunate than he, survived to form a happy union and earn the immortal fame which still illumines the name of Hinemoa —that name still celebrated, even though the fairy terraces of Tarata charm the traveller no more, and the magical fire-bordered lake, even Rotorua, be whelmed in a cataclysm.

Mr. Summers was kept accurately informed by his native converts of the progress of the war. He heard details of the siege of Orakau in which the little household was more than usually interested, from the fact of Henare Taratoa and other converts being in the enemy's ranks.

"Poor Henare!" said Mrs. Summers; "he was our most promising scholar—gentle, brave, chivalrous, the very embodiment of generosity. He no doubt believes that he is fighting for his king and country now that they have set up this fetish of Potatau. It seems very hard, after all the trouble we took with him and the others."

"And why should he *not* fight?" asked Hypatia, with raised head and flashing eyes. "And—

> 'How can man die better,
> When facing fearful odds?'

The position is exactly that of Horatius. History repeats itself. I, for one, do not wonder that any man of his tribe, or woman either, should fight to the

death in this quarrel. The more I learn about the beginning of this lamentable war, the more I feel that the authors of it must be condemned by impartial observers."

"It cannot be logically defended," admitted Mr. Summers; "and, personally, I deplore the inevitable consequences, the temporary ruin of our hopes, the destruction of our schools and churches, the arrest of civilized progress. But some such conflict was unavoidable."

"But why?" asked Hypatia.

"The two races," answered he, "would never have continued to live together in peace. The Maori nature, proud, jealous, revengeful, holding themselves to be the original owners of the country, the English to be strangers and invaders, forbade a lasting peace. They were unwilling to dispose of their lands—these millions of fertile acres of which they made little or no use. The colonizing Briton would never have consented to stand idly by and see this great country, fitted to be the home of millions of Anglo-Saxons or other Europeans, held by a handful of barbarians."

"But how about the Divine command, 'Thou shalt not steal,' 'Do unto others'—ordinances, the keeping of which is enjoined upon individuals, but which are so conveniently ignored by nations?"

"As a minister of the Gospel and a preacher of the Word, I am compelled to admit that our national policy and our national religion are often at variance. Still, it cannot be denied that the advance of civilization has mainly depended upon conquests and the doctrine of force. In our own land the ancient Britons were dispossessed by the Romans and the Iberian

Celts; these, again, by Jutes and Saxons, who in turn were conquered by the Normans. These people found a weaker race, the Morioris, whom they slew and enslaved. They nearly depopulated the South Island, and would have wholly done so but for our arrival. They have always acted upon, and perfectly understand—

> 'The ancient plan,
> That they should take who had the power,
> And he should keep who can.'"

"That is intelligible," said Hypatia, with a sigh; "but I must say I cannot help sympathizing with the Maori Ranga-tira, in the spirit of the Douglas at Tantallon moralizing over Marmion—

> '"'Tis pity of him, too!" he cried;
> "Bold can he speak and fairly ride.
> I warrant him a warrior tried."'"

"Do not forget the poor wahines," said Mrs. Summers. "Like all women in these affairs of state, they seem to have the worst of it. Think of them at Orakau, marching out of their blood-stained pah in the midst of a hail of bullets, hungry, thirsty, perhaps wounded, and yet, without doubt, they joined in the defiant shout of '*Akoré, akoré, akoré!*'"

"It was glorious," said Hypatia. "I could have wished to have been there. It has immortalized them, as well as the warriors among whom they fought. It will re-echo through the ages long after the pahs are grass-grown, or perhaps made into tea-gardens for the coming race."

"That reminds me that it must be lunch-time," interposed Mrs. Summers, gently; and, with a half-

reproachful gaze, the indignant advocate subsided, and retired to her chamber.

* * * * * *

Matters went on calmly and peacefully in this lodge in the wilderness, disturbed but from time to time with war rumours and tidings of siege or skirmish. Occasionally a burst of weeping and dolorous long-drawn lamentation in the Maori camp told that a friend or kinsman had been added to the death-roll. Then a former convert or pupil would stagger in, wounded almost to the death, to be tended, and cured, if such were possible, for no slightly wounded combatant ever taxed the warm welcome of the Mikonaree and his household. They were either sent away rejoicing in their new-found strength and ability to level a musket once more at the marauding pakeha, or, in other case, were laid to rest in the mission graveyard, comforted by the thought that the Burial Service would be read over them by the good pakeha whom they had learned to trust and revere.

Sometimes, when hope had departed, and they began to count their remaining hours, they returned to the lessons which had been with such care instilled into them in the old peaceful days of the earlier missions. They placed their trust in the mediation of Him whom they connected with their conversion, and recalled the weekly services and baptismal vows, happy in the unshaken faith of youth, and passing away to spirit-land without doubt or fear.

At other times, the warrior, roused to frenzy by pain or despair, would solemnly renounce the stranger's God and all His ways, and quit this life, so incomprehensible to him, chanting the ancient war-song of

his ancestors, and electing to follow them to the Maori heaven by the stormy path of the reinga.

A chance newspaper—for, of course, all mail-carrying had been stopped, as well as their irregular intelligence department—brought them the news of the greater and the lesser world from time to time. In one of these latter distributors of hopes and fears they came across these alarming head-lines :—

"The Gate Pah! Captured after a Stubborn Resistance! Panic among the 43rd Regiment! Loss of Officers unprecedented! Names of the Killed and Wounded!"

The list was long, and eagerly scanned. Many were names of European reputation ; others, again, of colonial fame, well known to all New Zealand residents. With their heads close together, the names were read out first by one, then another, as different degrees of knowledge or acquaintance prevailed. Mrs. Summers was repeating the last two or three names, when she came to Lieutenant Massinger of the Forest Rangers, "*Reported missing!*"

"Whom did you say?" cried Hypatia, almost with a shriek. "Not Roland Massinger? Oh, don't say he is dead!"

"He is not dead, my dear," said Mrs. Summers, "only missing. That means, I suppose, that he has not rejoined his regiment. There is nothing so very alarming about that."

"Not alarming—not alarming!" answered Hypatia, in low anguished tones. "Do you know what it means? It may be worse than dead—far worse. He may be in the hands of the enemy—given over to torture. Who can tell? And it is I who am to

blame for his presence in this country, for his taking part in this dreadful war. His blood is upon my head, wretched girl that I am!"

"My dear Hypatia," said Mrs. Summers, gently taking her hand, "why rush to such extreme conclusions? In the first place, the poor fellow is not known to be dead, or even a prisoner. In the next, you cannot be held responsible for the rash resolve of a man whom you felt you could not marry. It is most unfortunate, I grant you, but surely you are not to be held accountable."

"No, no! it was all my doing. My heedlessness and vanity must have encouraged him, or he would never have thought of me in that way. Then a foolish ambition stifled any natural liking. I *did* like and respect him far more than any other man I had ever met. And now, this is the end of it! He is dead, and I am the unhappy cause. I shall never recover it."

Words were of no avail. In vain Cyril Summers and his wife tried to moderate her passionate remorse. She could see nothing but the darkest fate and endless sorrow before her. She had destroyed his happiness, his career, and now his life had been sacrificed to her insane desire to travel out of the sphere which Providence had assigned to her.

Comparatively soothed by Mr. Summers' promise to send a trusty messenger to procure reliable information as to his disappearance and probable fate, she at length consented to retire with her friend and comforter. To retire, but not to rest. If she slept, troubled visions of pale corpses and blood-stained victims mingled with her dreams, and the dawn had appeared before the slumbers which soothe alike the young

and old, the innocent and the guilty, brought transient rest and peace to her troubled spirit.

Mr. Summers tranquillized her somewhat by sending away a native convert, long associated with the mission, and at her request his wife went also. They were a trustworthy and devoted pair, whose loyalty had been well tried since the outbreak of hostilities. Known by the rebels as Mikonaree natives, they were enabled to pass and repass unharmed. Indeed, they were always welcomed by the insurgents, who never charged them with bad faith. It was rather the other way, inasmuch as the friendly natives were more than suspected of giving information of probable movements by the troops to their countrymen. But, if it were so, their apologists replied that it was, after all, merely in accordance with the ancient Maori custom, which was to send notice to the enemy that they were coming to attack them. The famous Hongi did so in the case of his next-door neighbour, Hinaki, Chief of the Ngati-maru tribe, when they met in Sydney, at Mr. Marsden's dinner-table, after the former's return from England, saying, "Get your tribe ready as soon as you return, for I am going to attack you when I get back to Te Hauraki." He was as bad as his word, and with the aid of civilization (muskets and powder), succeeded in taking the famous Totara pah, slaughtering a thousand Ngati-maru, then killing (and eating) a large proportion of his compatriot's tribe.

Ponui and Awariki did not lose time, but started away in light marching order for the seat of war, secretly pleased and excited by the prospect of hearing all about the bloody engagement and its attendant

horrors, while manifesting a decent show of sorrow for the pakeha's early fate.

They were several days absent, during the lingering hours of which Hypatia held herself to be a prey to the fabled Furies. She was fully impressed with the idea that an evil fate had befallen the missing soldier, on account of which the messengers hesitated to return, awaiting fuller information.

Thus, daily becoming more and more deeply depressed and remorseful, she pondered upon the mysterious workings of Providence, disposed to question its justice in permitting so bitter a blow to be dealt to her—to her, who had always acted in undoubting faith! Upon what trifling events do the great evils and misfortunes of life appear to depend! Like the extra allowance of sunshine in the Alpine world, which sets free the tiny ice stream, which again unlooses the blind and devastating avalanche, what a tragedy had her heedless action set in motion! And the end was not yet. Of what gruesome, blood-curdling tidings might not the messengers be the bearers!

After a night of miserable imaginings, Hypatia arose to find that the messengers had returned, and furnished a report of their inquiries to Mr. Summers, who, condensing it for her information, hastened to relieve her worst apprehensions.

"Before entering into detail, let me assure you, my dear Miss Tollemache," he said, "that we have good grounds for believing that Sir Roland is alive, and, if not unwounded, most likely in good hands."

"What do they say?" asked she, with tremulous lips. "Were they able to see any one who knew?

His friends—Mr. Slyde, I mean. I have heard they were comrades."

"They joined the Forest Rangers at the same time, I heard; and there was also the half-caste guide, Warwick, a very fine fellow, who has attached himself to our friend. Ponui saw both of them."

"Surely they would know. They did not desert him?"

"There was no hint of desertion. Every officer of note was killed or wounded within the first twenty minutes of the assault of the storming party—they among the number. Warwick was severely wounded. Mr. Slyde was unconscious, and it was thought mortally wounded; but after Warwick had staggered to the place where he had seen Lieutenant Massinger fall, he found that he had disappeared."

"Then they know nothing—absolutely *nothing!*" said Hypatia. "I thought you said there were grounds for believing——"

"Allow me to continue," said the Reverend Cyril. "Awariki went among the women of the camp, of whom there were many. There she found a cousin who had married a Ngapuhi. She seemed to have been under fire also, as she had a bullet through her upper arm."

"I *should* like to have been there," said Hypatia, her eyes lighting up with a gathering intensity, as she gazed before her towards the dark-hued mountains which bounded their landscape. "What did she see?"

"As she rushed forward through the *mêlée*—for her husband was badly wounded—she saw the 'pakeha rangatira,' as she called him, fall, apparently dead.

A Maori was just about to tomahawk him, when Mr. Mannering (Tao-roa, as they call him) dashed him aside, knocking him down, and calling aloud to his people, two of whom lifted up the pakeha, and commenced to carry him to the rear. Immediately afterwards several women joined them, one of whom she was confident was Erena Mannering, his daughter, who, of course, was well known to the tribe. After this ensued the extraordinary panic of the 43rd, and all trace of him was lost."

"Then they did not succeed in getting him back to the Ngapuhi camp (isn't that the name?), and they do not know what has become of him, after all?"

"Merely this, that Awariki says she is certain that if Erena had been taken prisoner, she is a person of such importance that the whole *hapu* would have been sent in pursuit. She is confident that she and the others are in safety, or else Mr. Mannering would not be at ease and with his people."

"But why did she not ask him?"

"He is a war chief of the Ngapuhi, and she, a common person, did not dare to address him on such a subject. It would not be *tika*, or etiquette, breaches of which are severely punished."

"But what do *you* think yourself? All this is very slender evidence—mere hearsay, in fact."

"I fully believe that he is in some secure retreat, watched over by this extraordinary girl, Erena Mannering, whose courage and devotion have, under Providence, saved his life."

"May she find His mercy in her hour of need!" said Hypatia, with clasped hands and streaming eyes. "If it be so, my soul will be freed from a

burden almost too heavy to bear. It may be hoping against hope, but I really begin to believe that his life will be spared. That granted by Heaven, I shall have nothing—positively *nothing*—to wish for in the future."

The remaining incidents in the capture of the memorable Gate Pah were duly recorded by Awariki for the benefit of the household—how the sailors, the sea-warriors of the pakeha, whose raiment was of a blue colour, they who sprang over the palisades as if they were ships' rigging, and the men in red who fought madly and cursed always, had been bewitched by the spell of the Tohunga of the Ngaiterangi, and had fled. The men in big hats (the Forest Rangers), who walked through the bush, the flax, and the fern by night and day; the Ngapuhi, who rushed on like a breaking wave, were all in vain against the rifle-pits of the Ngaiterangi, whereby men were killed without seeing who fired at them.

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Passing from one mood to the other, as is wont with women whose highly strung nervous system seems impatient of continuous action, Hypatia at length made up her mind that Massinger was alive, and safely bestowed in some sylvan retreat, under the care of this mysterious, fascinating Maori girl, of whom she had already heard much.

The natural jealousy, invariably felt by the average woman during the appropriation by another one of an erstwhile, probable, or even possible lover, had no place in Hypatia's generous mind. "If only he is alive and well, I care nothing," thought she. "That she risked her life to save his, I can well believe.

All honour to her. I am at least guiltless of his blood. I shall always feel grateful to her, for lifting that load from my soul."

Thus, when she arose next morning and commenced to busy herself about the indispensable duties of the household, she experienced a feeling of relief to which she had been long a stranger. The day was fine, the clouds of heaven had disappeared, it would seem, simultaneously with those of her spirit. As in the Northern Britain, with its frequent rain and hail, mist and snow, this rare day, on which the disturbing forces of the elements held truce, was inexpressibly lovely. The mountain snow-crown was revealed in all its purity and austere majesty, a silver diadem against the blue and lustrous heavens. The fruit trees in the garden, the oaks and elms, poplars and walnuts, planted in fond remembrance of the dear old home-land, seemed bursting into redundant greenery. The river rippled and murmured under its o'er-arching ferns, and as the little band of dark-skinned children, with their glancing eyes and smiling faces, all obedient and cheerful, passed on to the modest building, wherein they were daily so patiently taught by their pastor and his wife, she could hardly refrain from expressing her thankfulness for the success of this single-hearted enterprise, in which she had been deemed worthy to share.

That the wave of barbaric warfare might at any moment sweep over the peaceful scene, leaving ruin and desolation in its track, seemed, in the glory of that beauteous morn, incredible and preposterous. During later musings, however, when the routine business of the little school failed to absorb her

attention, the thought would obtrude itself of the strange complication of affairs which would arise if, as was rumoured, Roland was about to marry this half-savage girl, as she could not but consider her. Beautiful she was by all report, devoted she must have been to her white lover, educated to a certain extent, and, in virtue of her father's lands granted in earlier times, an heiress of considerable pretensions. But—— ! She well knew what a death-in-life it would be considered by his English friends. Of course, it was far from improbable. Younger sons and others of aristocratic British families had married these fascinating half-caste girls, even those of pure Maori blood. This she knew from authentic sources. In this distant land, so far from British social edicts, such a marriage was not looked upon as a *mésalliance*. And if such should be his lot, who would have been the dominant factor in thus shaping his destiny ? Who but herself, unwilling, doubtless, but none the less the primary agent in his deportation, his colonial career, with its risks, dangers, and this irrevocable lapse—finally, his absorption in a different class and an alien race ? She felt minded to groan aloud. Why should she have been selected to work all this misery and ruin, ending, perhaps, in death ? Why could she not foresee the direful consequences flowing from his fatal *entrainement ?*

It was hard, very hard. Other men had paid her court before and since his advent. They had accepted their dismissals calmly, carelessly, irritably, sullenly, according to their several temperaments ; in no case had serious results followed. They had mended their damaged or disturbed organs by philosophy, travel,

gaiety, or marriage, chiefly affecting the latter anodyne. It was surely one of the ironies of Fate that the consequences to this particular *pretendu* had been so serious—the only one as to whose denial she had felt suspicion of her heart's teaching in the ordeal.

Now, at least, all was over. She had decreed that he should have no further part or lot in her life. If he was safe, Fate might do her worst. She had always claimed the right to mould her own existence. Surely she could do so still. Yet she sighed as she told herself thus proudly that she was sufficient for her own high conception of duty. As to happiness, that was another thing. Who were we, worms of the dust, ephemera of the hour, that we should arrogate to ourselves the right to a condition of perfect satisfaction? Harmony with our surroundings, always improbable, was chiefly impossible. The stars in their courses, as well as all the powers of darkness, were leagued to prevent it. And yet—and yet—— Here the introspective reverie ceased, and Hypatia recalled herself to the more urgent and practical demands of daily life.

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On the following morning Mr. Summers appeared at breakfast in an unwonted state of excitement, almost of agitation.

"What is the matter, my dear Cyril," inquired the anxious wife. "Is the war news worse than usual?"

"Not quite so bad as that," he said, with a reassuring smile, "but important, notwithstanding. I have just heard that the bishop is coming to pay us a visit, and will stay all night on his way to Tauranga."

"How did you hear? You quite frightened me.

I shall be charmed to have him. Hypatia will be overjoyed, I know. He is one of her heroes."

"A Maori messenger gave me this note," he replied, producing a twisted and discoloured piece of paper, on which was written—

"MY DEAR CYRIL,

"I propose, with God's blessing, to be with you on Tuesday at midday. If Mrs. Summers can accommodate me, I should like to remain with you for one night. Will hold service in afternoon. Assemble the people—it may be for the last time.

"G. A. NEW ZEALAND."

"And when does he say that we may expect him?" asked Hypatia.

"At or before midday," replied Mr. Summers. "Of course, he will only remain for the night, as he is anxious to push on to Tauranga. But he would like to hold an afternoon service; so I must get in all our people in the neighbourhood, and, of course, the school-children.

"I am charmed with the idea," said Hypatia. "Just fancy! I have had him in my thoughts ever since I thought of coming to New Zealand. One does not often see an *apostle* in the flesh. And he is one, if ever it is given to man to behold one of God's messengers."

"That I, too, am overjoyed, you will not doubt," said Cyril. "I have a filial feeling towards him. I was one of his curates when he first came to New Zealand. How many a long journey on foot we made together! He is a tireless walker, and a

champion athlete in half a dozen classes. Such a man in a boat, too! He has risked his life scores of times to my knowledge. And now to think that so much of his life's labour has been lost! It is heart-breaking."

"Do not say that, my dear Cyril," came in Mary Summers' quiet voice. "The good seed has been sown. In the time to come it will bring forth, 'some fiftyfold, some an hundredfold,' as we are told in God's Word. Look what poor Henare Taratoa did, even when fighting against us in the Gate Pah! That was the fruit of our teaching here, I am thankful to say."

"What was that?" said Hypatia.

"One of the Maori women that came away from the Gate Pah said that when Colonel Booth was lying mortally wounded and perishing with thirst—for there was no water in the pah for the last two days—Henare stole out by night and passed through our lines, thereby risking his life, and brought back a calabash of water, which he placed by the side of the dying man. It was found there next morning by our men after the natives had left the pah."

"What a splendid fellow!" said Hypatia. "He fought for his country, as why should he not? But then, having received the Christian faith, he followed implicitly the precepts he had learned. Our men would have given water to wounded Maoris, but which of them would have risked his life to procure it?"

"I could tell you of other instances of similar conduct," said Mr. Summers. "The bishop, when he comes, will, I am sure, add to my list. But we must

set to work now to ensure him a suitable reception. You will have a sermon, too, which, like all his addresses, will be deeply impressive."

All requisite preparations having been made, and a sort of "fiery cross" sent round in the hands of a fleet-limbed native youngster, a considerable gathering of Maoris of all ages and conditions was present at the appointed time. They came in honour of that heroic personage, George Augustus Selwyn, the famous Bishop of New Zealand, the hero of a hundred legends, the pioneer missionary, the modern embodiment of faith, zeal, and devotion, who had always been willing—nay, passionately eager—in the words of St. Paul, "to spend and be spent" in the service of his Master.

Hypatia stood back a little space while Mr. Summers and his wife warmly welcomed their pastor and master, with an earnestness there was no mistaking. The dark-skinned contingent then closed in, and obstructed her view of the man whom (with one exception), of all living personages, she was the most anxious to see, whom by reputation she honoured with a feeling akin to adoration.

He had come attended only by a middle-aged Maori, whose grizzled countenance and war-worn features showed that he had done his share in the professional occupation of the Maori *gentilhomme* of the period. He stood apart, leaning on his musket, but from the respect with which he was treated by all who approached, it was evident that he was a personage of no ordinary consideration.

It was a scene of more than ordinary interest. The older members of the *hapu* who still dwelt in

the vicinity of the mission, were chiefly those who from age or infirmity were debarred from going to the war, then waged within so short a distance of their homes. A large proportion was composed of women, children, and young people not yet entitled to rank as combatants. All in turn came to be presented to the *Pihopa* Rangatira, making obeisance due and lowly. To each one he addressed a few words in Maori, the replies to which were made with evident pleasure, the children almost gasping with pride and gratification at the honour of the interview. Inquiries were made after well-known men, who had formerly been regular attendants at the little church, but too often resulted in downcast looks, as the sad word *maté* (dead) came forth, and in broken accents the name of the battle, skirmish, or locality was uttered. Well posted in the personal history of the missionary centres and their converts, the bishop never failed to bestow a word of sympathy or condolence upon the mourners.

The reception being ended, Mr. Summers announced that the assembly was free to betake itself to their *kai* (or meal), which had been prepared, taxing to the utmost the resources of the establishment.

"Permit me, my lord, to present to you Miss Tollemache, a friend and schoolfellow of my wife," said Mr. Summers, as they moved towards the cottage. "A young lady lately from England, who has cast in her lot with us."

The bishop looked with extreme surprise at the distinguished-looking girl, so unlike what he naturally expected to see at the place and time. Bowing, however, with easy grace, he said—

"I am afraid I cannot congratulate you upon the occasion you have selected in which to commence your labours in the Master's vineyard. Have you had previous experience, may I ask?"

"I have had two years' work in and around Whitechapel," said she. "I took up the East End City Mission work soon after I finished my college course."

"Then you have quitted your first sphere of usefulness, may I say, for a wider field?"

"I discovered," said Hypatia, "that the locality was not suited to my age and disposition. I retired in favour of more experienced workers. Gathering from the letters of my dear friend and schoolfellow, Mrs. Summers, that she needed help, I decided to come here."

"And you did well, my dear young lady, to follow the dictates of your heart, though I would it had happened a few years previously, when we were all rejoicing in the fruition of our hopes and the visible reward of years of toil and privation. Now, alas! there have been sad backslidings, griefs, and discouragements. I have been sorely tempted to despair; but He who has hitherto led us through the wilderness will not abandon us now. May His blessing be upon you, my dear child, and upon all in this household. Though terrors encompass us, we know in whom to trust, as our Defender and Guide."

As he spoke, standing within sight of the mountain and the wave, with head raised, and that noble countenance illumined with the courage that is not of this earth—the fervent faith in things not seen—he appeared to Hypatia as a prophet inspired,

transfigured, worthy to bear His sacred message, to speak the words of the Most High. Her overwrought emotional feelings overpowered her. Yielding to an irresistible impulse, she cast herself on her knees before him and cried aloud—

"Bless me, O my father, even me!"

Strongly stirred, the good bishop laid his hands solemnly upon her head, saying—

"May the Lord God, Most High, Most Mighty, bless, protect, and save thee, dear child, from all evils of body and mind, also from all the sorrows and terrors of this distracted land. May He shield thee in the hour of need, and may His guidance be with thee until thou art led in safety to thy home and thy friends. For Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Hypatia retired to the little room which she had occupied since her sojourn in Oropi, feeling a renewed confidence in the vocation which she had adopted, and a fervent resolve to persevere in the path marked out for her, no matter what obstacles might present themselves.

When she appeared at the simple midday meal, all traces of emotion and excitement had vanished. The little household talked freely of the conclusion of the war as being at hand, and, that once an established fact, the recovery of the country and the revival of the Church were but matters of time.

"And do you think that the two races will ever agree to live in peace and amity, after all the blood that has been shed?" asked Hypatia, leaning forward with a rapt and eager look upon her face which reminded the bishop of the early Christian martyrs.

"One may well doubt, Miss Tollemache," said he,

with a sad yet unshaken air of confidence. "The best blood of England has been shed like water in these sieges and engagements. Still, I foresee the termination. It cannot be distant now. The flower of the Maori warriors and their leading chiefs lie low. All history teaches us that a conquered people is always absorbed into the superior race in course of time."

"But the difference in origin and tradition?" queried Mr. Summers.

"Is by no means an insuperable obstacle," answered the bishop. "In those mixed unions which have already taken place, no degeneration of type is apparent; indeed, to speak frankly, it has even appeared to me that the offspring in many instances show an advance, physically and mentally, upon both the parent stocks. I could name instances, but it is perhaps unnecessary."

"We have our Joan of Arc, too," interposed Mrs. Summers; "only, unfortunately for the romance, she is fighting or nursing, whichever it may be, on the invaders' side."

"You mean Erena Mannering," said the bishop. "I know her well—or did, rather, in the dear old past days. She is truly a noble damsel in every sense of the word. Her Herculean father is a paladin for valour, struggling with the tastes of a *savant* and philosopher. In a different age he would have stood at a monarch's right hand, or more probably have been a conqueror in his own person. Her mother was a chieftainess, brave, beautiful, and of long descent. No wonder that she is a marvel of womanhood!"

"She is not without friends who appreciate her," said Hypatia, smiling at the enthusiasm of the sympathetic prelate. "Fortunate girl! to be born to a heroine's task, a heroine's applause. This is the last home of romance, it would appear, since it has quitted Britain, at any rate for the present."

"Have you heard the last rumour about her, my lord?" said Mr. Summers.

"No, indeed. Koihua and I came across the bush after leaving the Forest Rangers before Orakau. I trust no harm to her is feared."

"No, but the situation is not wholly free from risk. A young lieutenant of the Forest Rangers, wounded in the storming party, which was repulsed at the Gate Pah, is reported missing. It is said that she was seen with a small party of natives, who carried him off at the bidding of her father, and that neither she nor he have been since heard of."

"In that case it is most probable that she saved his life, and, in the absence of definite information, I should be inclined to believe that he has been taken to a place of safety, where he will remain for the present. What did you say his name was?"

"Roland Massinger."

"Not De Massinger of the Court, in Herefordshire —surely not?" said the bishop, more keenly interested. "I saw him in camp when I came from Pukerimu, poor boy! I knew his people well in England—among the very oldest families in the land. I met him soon after his arrival in Auckland. Whatever hard fate brought him into this disastrous strife? But I should not say fate; rather the will of God, which often from present chastening leads to our

eventual gain. But the time draws near for our service—the last, most probably, that I shall hold here. It will be my farewell to these poor people, whom I have loved and prayed for so often."

And as the good man retired to his chamber for the preparation of prayer which he always held to be necessary, even in the most thinly populated and apparently humble localities, Hypatia took the opportunity of escaping from a conversation which threatened embarrassing conditions.

Punctually at the appointed hour, the bell of the little church having sounded for the canonical time, the man of God walked through the crowd of dark-skinned proselytes, who awaited his arrival with unaffected reverence; and murmurs of approbation were heard as he paced with solemn steps towards the humble building, for which many of those present had contributed labour or materials. Yet were not all fully agreed. Some of the older men had been acted upon by the disaffected of the tribe, and hardly concealed their distrust of the pihopa, who went between the contending forces, and might, perhaps, convey information to their foes. This allegation, openly made at the rebel camp, caused the good bishop the most poignant grief—to think that his people, his children in the Lord, as he fondly called them, should distrust him, who for them, for their present advantage and eternal weal, had sacrificed the intellectual luxuries of the parent land, his place among the noble and the great, all the unspeakable social advantages which await the distinguished son of literature and the Church in Britain! And for what? To live in self-imposed exile in a distant

colony, among a barbarous people but recently redeemed from the grossest heathen practices! It was more than discouraging, it was heart-breaking, to one of his sensitive temperament and fervent spirit.

The service of the Church of England was read by Mr. Summers. Hypatia was touched by the manner in which the responses were made by young and old. Nowhere in the world could more earnestness have been shown, less apparent wavering from the appointed ritual, which was wholly in the Maori tongue. She had made sufficient progress in the language to follow easily—a task lightened by the preponderance of vowels and the disuse of the perplexing consonants so frequent in European tongues. A greater advance can be made in Maori in a shorter time than in almost any living language. There is much of the *ore rotundo* claimed for the noble fundamental languages, which now only survive among degenerate descendants of the orators, warriors, statesmen, and artists, who, while they rolled out the sonorous sentences, swayed the known world with their pre-eminence in arts and arms, speech and song.

The prayers of the Anglican Church were concluded. Then the great apostle of the South Seas ascended an ornate pulpit, the gift of a few English friends of Mr. Summers, the carving of which had much impressed the native congregation, themselves by no means without practice in this ancient section of art. In his sermon—short, fervent, and chiefly persuasive—he appealed to those better feelings which the teaching of the missionary clergy, of whatever

denomination, had been chiefly desirous of fostering. "What," he asked, "had been the condition of the tribes before that great and good man Marsden, the pioneer pastor, came among them? War unbridled, ruthless, remorseless, with its accompaniments still more dreadful—slavery, torture, child-murder, the eating of human flesh, practices which, to their honour be it spoken, the Maoris as a nation had discontinued. Were they not ashamed of these things?" ("Yes, yes!" from the assembled crowd.) "Who had taught them to be ashamed of these things? The missionary clergy, the pakeha from beyond the seas. Who had given them the seed, the grain, the potato, the domestic animals, the tools of iron, from which they now reaped such abundant harvests and stores of produce? Bread, flour-mills, garden-seeds and vegetables,—all these came from the pakeha. Who taught them the use of all these things? The Mikonaree. He laboured with his hands, he lived poorly, he coveted nothing for himself, he only held a small portion of their waste lands on which to grow food for himself and his family.

"He had done all this. But he had done more. He had taught them to worship the only true God, and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord—the God of mercy, of truth, of charity, of peace. And had they not lived in peace, in plenty, in good will among themselves, until this war arose, which was now raging to the destruction of Maori and pakeha alike? Who counselled this shedding of blood, this burning of pahs? The clergy? No. They knew that the voice of every clergyman, every missionary in both

islands, had been against it, was against it now. If his advice had been taken, a runanga would have been held, of the wisest pakehas and the high rangatiras. Judges like Mannering and Waterton would have sat there—men who knew the Maori tongue and the Maori customs. They would have done justice. The Waitara would never have been bought from Teira. The Maori law would have been respected, as well as the English law, in which every man has equal rights, the native as well as the pakeha. Then there would have been no war; no killing of pakeha settlers who wished to cultivate the soil and to live in peace; no death of the soldiers and sailors; no death of the volunteers who wished to buy and sell in the towns, who bought the natives' pigs and potatoes, their wheat and their flax; no death of high chiefs or of the young men of the tribes, of officers of the troops, of officers of the ships. All these of the young and the old who now lie cold in the earth or beneath the sky would be alive and well this day." Here more than one face betrayed deep feeling; falling tears and gestures of unutterable anguish told their tale.

"But the war, unhappily, had commenced, and still raged. Unwise white men, proud and haughty chiefs, had been impatient, and forced on the war. Had the Maoris respected the lessons they had been taught, and been patient, even when suffering injustice, all would have been well. The Waitara block would have been given up. It has been given up *now*. They had many friends in the pakeha runanga; even in Sydney the Kawana Dennitoni had sent a letter in their favour, warning the council of the

pakehas not to take Waitara. But there were unwise men on both sides. Blood was shed. And the state of war took place. And now you will say, 'This is all very well, but we knew much of this before. The state of war is accomplished. What are we to do? What is best for the Maori people?'

"I will tell you. This is my saying. I have prayed to God that it may be right and wise, according to His will, and for your benefit, who are my children in the Lord. We have always taught you to desire peace—peace and good will towards all men. Cherish no more hard feelings against the pakeha. You will have to live in the land with him. His race is the stronger, the more numerous; he has ships, soldiers, and guns, more than you can number; they are like the sands of the seashore.

"The war must soon be over. I, who speak to you now, say so. Heed not those foolish men of your race who tell you to go on fighting. It is of no use. When the last battle is fought, and my words come true, yield yourself to the Kawana, Hori Grey, saying, 'We are conquered. Show us mercy. We desire peace for the future.' He has always been a friend of the Maori people. He is a friend now. You will find that you will receive mercy, that a portion of your lands will be restored to you. Not all. Part will be taken for *utu*, as by Maori custom. After that I say, heed my words and those of the good Mikonaree who have always tried to do you good—who will do you more good in the future. 'Love your enemies; do good to those who despitefully use you. If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink,' as did Henare Taratoa, whom I taught when he was

young. You can read your Bible, many of you. Do what you are there commanded, and it will be well with you.

"And now it may be that you will see my face no more. I have been called back to the land whence I came, so many years ago, to do you good, to help, to teach every man, woman, and child in this land of Maui; such I may have done, though the seed of the Word has sometimes perished by the wayside. But other seed, I will believe, has taken root, and will bring forth, in due time, some twenty, some fifty, some an hundred fold.

"And when the day comes, as come it will, when peace overspreads the land, when the churches are again crowded, when the schools are full of your children, when the harvests are bounteous, and the Maori people are as well clothed, as well fed, and as well taught as the pakehas, you will hear that your pihopa, the man who loved you and prayed with you, is no more. In that hour remember that I told you all this would come to pass, and honour his *mana* by obeying the words of his mouth, and the commandment of the most high God."

As the sermon neared this conclusion, the hearts of the people were more deeply and strongly affected. Tears streamed down the faces of the younger members of the congregation. Sobs and groans were frequent. And as he turned to leave the little chapel, a simultaneous rush was made to the door, so as to be enabled to say a last farewell. All doubt and hesitation as to his actions since the war were swept away by the magic of his vibrating voice, the magnetic force of his earnest tones. They now commenced to realize that

they were losing a friend in need, a judge in Israel, a champion in the day of their oppression.

As he left the church with his host and hostess, the women and children clustered around him, with cries of grief and genuine sorrow. They knelt before him, they struggled for the right to kiss his hand, they implored him to come again ; they vowed that they would always be his children, and would obey his commands till their death.

It was to Hypatia a scene indescribably affecting. The tears came to her own eyes as she stood there, sympathetic, emotional, wondering no more at the contagious power of the united forces of faith, enthusiasm, and oratory combined to sway a multitude and lead a people to heroic deeds. The men stood aloof while the women were making their moan, and then came forward respectfully, each to receive a handshake and a word of greeting, advice, or friendly warning. Last of all, the few elders who had attended as it were under protest, made known their recantation of doubt or distrust. An aged chief, whose scarred countenance and limbs told a tale of ancient wars, hobbled forward, leaning upon his *hano.* With an air of mingled dignity and despondency he thus delivered himself—

"This is my saying, the saying of Tupa-roa the aged. I have listened to the words of the pihopa rangatira ; they are good words. The great Atua of the pakehas has spoken in them. If we had hearkened to them before, if we had said at Waitara, 'This thing is unjust, but we will not fight ; we will leave it to a Court ; we will send a letter to the Kawini across the sea ; we will ask for justice till the

winds cease to blow, till the fire-mountain in White Island stops breathing flame;' then our wisdom would have been great. What the pakeha says is true. We had many friends, just men, in the pakeha runanga. After all, Waitara was given back. Why? Were the pakehas afraid? No! See what has come of it. My son is dead, and his"—pointing to another elder who stood near him—"and Takerei and Puoho, all dead—all gone past the reinga, where I also shall soon follow. But we were as children, who see not into the future. Those unwise ones, who should be silent in council, were allowed to lead the nation; and now we are a broken people, our pahs are burned with fire. Our lands are taken, our sons are dead, also our high chiefs. If we had listened to the pihopa, to the Mikonaree, to Kawana, Hori Grey, these things would not have come to pass. My saying to you, O people, is to show honour to the pihopa and his *mana*, and so will it be well with you, with all of us, and our children's children."

Here he advanced, and motioning to one of the seniors who carried his greenstone *mere*, an emblem always of honour and authority, he made a gesture of humility and handed it to the bishop, who, receiving it, shook hands warmly with the old warrior and his aged companions. At this moment Mr. Summers gave out the Hundredth Psalm, which the whole congregation took up and sang with wonderful fervour and correctness, many of the voices being rich and expressive. At the close, the bishop, raising his hand, solemnly pronounced the benediction, and the congregation slowly departed.

"What a wonderful scene!" said Hypatia to Mrs. Summers, as she and the two children walked slowly after the bishop and her husband. "I feel certain that they will not believe it in England, when I write and tell them what interest these people showed in the service. There was none of the yawning or irreverence that one often sees in a village church there. How they hung upon the bishop's words! I could understand a good deal, but not all. It is a fine language, too, and by no means difficult to learn."

"Didn't old Tupa-roa talk well, mother?" said the eldest girl, a fair-haired Saxon-looking child, the rose bloom of whose cheeks did justice to the temperate climate. "He looked very fierce, too, when he spoke about the war, his sons, and the chiefs, all *maté, maté, maté*."

"I thought it inexpressibly mournful," said Hypatia. "The aged veteran, a war-chief, I suppose, in his time, grieving over his broken tribe and ruined land. Owning, too, that if wise councils had prevailed all might have been avoided."

"He was a great chief once," said the little girl. "Old Tapaia told me that he used to kill people, and eat them too. Wasn't that horrid? But he has been good for a long time, hasn't he?"

"You mustn't believe all that Tapaia tells you," said Mrs. Summers; "and you know I don't like you to talk to the old women, only to Hiraka, who is sure to tell you nothing foolish. You monkeys can chatter Maori as well as any child in the kainga. I think I must forbid you going there at all."

"Oh, mother, I will be good, and never talk to

the old women, if you will let me go sometimes. The children are so funny, and they play such nice games. One is just like our cat's cradle."

"You can go, my dear child, when I am with you, or Miss Tollemache, but not by yourself. And now it must be nearly tea-time, so let us get home. The bishop will leave us at sunrise, I know."

That evening, with its homely meal, was long remembered by Hypatia. The quiet converse continued far into the night with Mr. and Mrs. Summers. Even, moreover, a short private conversation which the good bishop found time to arrange with her sank deeply into her heart.

Having questioned her kindly but closely as to her motives for leaving her friends, and taking up the hard, unlovely, possibly dangerous, vocation she had adopted, he warned her against mistaking a transient preference—the novelty of a mission to the heathen—for the Divine summons.

"I do you full justice, my dear child," said he; "you are devoting yourself to the noblest earthly duty, but I feel it right to warn you that, though the war must be nearing its close, there may be even greater dangers in store for isolated households such as this. Even after the collapse of the hostile tribes, there may be desperate bands roaming the country, seeking by plunder and outrage to avenge the downfall of their race. I have warned Cyril, and have counselled him, on the first rumour of such horrors, to remove his household to Auckland, and, even as I would do in the case of my own daughter, I have urged him to send you to the protection of any friends you may have in New Zealand 'until this tyranny be

overpast.' Weigh my words well, and may God give you power to choose aright."

"I cannot fully express my deep gratitude, my lord, for the honour you have done me, and the interest you have taken in my welfare. That I did not devote myself to mission work without earnest and prayerful thought, your lordship may rest assured. I counted the cost beforehand, and now I cannot dream of deserting my colours, so to speak. You will not think that I am quite destitute of prudence. I shall accept the decision of my dear friend and her husband. If they think it imperative to retreat in the face of too evident danger, I shall accompany them. But as long as they remain, whatever may be the disquieting rumours, I shall be found at their side. '*Ake, ake, ake,*' as the men at Orakau said. We must not let the Maoris have all the glory on their side."

The bishop smiled as she used the historical words of the unconquered garrison, but could not forbear gazing with admiration at the high-souled maiden, as she stood with upraised head and flashing eyes before him ; a marvel of classic beauty, embodying all the nobility of form and feature which painters and sculptors have from the earliest ages loved to depict —an emblem of matchless womanhood devoted to a lofty ideal.

"We are all in God's hands," he said softly. "Let Him do what seemeth to Him good. May He bless and protect you, my child, and all who are of this household to-night."

Stars were contending with the rain-clouds of a stormy dawn as Hypatia drew back the curtain from

the window of her bedroom and looked out. She saw the bishop come forth from the guest-room at the end of the verandah, wrapped in his cloak. He handed his valise to the Maori attendant, Koihua, who stood motionless at the foot of an English elm tree, and with staff in hand set forth on the Tauranga road with the free step and elastic stride of a trained pedestrian. Once, and once only, at the first turn in the winding path did he look back for an instant, and, noting Hypatia's face at the window, waved his hat in token of farewell, and disappeared in the woodland. There were tears in Hypatia's eyes, springing from a sentiment she could hardly analyze, as she turned from the casement.

CHAPTER XV

ORAKAU was abandoned. The Gate Pah had been lost and won. It had also been avenged at Te Ranga, where a hundred and twenty Ngaiterangi warriors lay dead in the trenches, and the 43rd had full *utu* for the slaughter of their officers and comrades. With few exceptions, all the high chiefs were among the slain. The boastful Rawiri, the chivalrous Te Oriori, the Christian convert Henare Taratoa, had fought their last fight. On the body of the latter was found a letter in the native language, and the text, "If thine enemy hunger, give him food ; if he thirst, give him water."

Orakau was the Flodden of the Maori nation. As the fugitives from the blood-stained pah trooped across the fords of the Puniu on the night succeeding the fight, the parallel may well have occurred to Sir Walter Scott's countrymen, so many of whom have adopted New Zealand as their home.

> "Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless splash,
> While many a broken band,
> Disordered through her currents dash,
> To gain the Scottish land."

The war was practically over after the fall of Te

Ranga. The turbulent Waikato tribes had lost their high chiefs, their bravest young men. The flower of the land of Maui lay low. The universal wail rose high in a hundred kaingas. Taught by bitter experience, the more intelligent natives had arrived at the conclusion that the resistless pakeha must be obeyed. His soldiers and his sailors, his volunteers and his allies (leading tribes of their own blood), his guns and his mortars, were all too powerful. Their chiefs who had visited England and seen the might of Britain had told them as much before. But, strong in the pride of their own power and the oracles of the Tohungas, they did not believe it. Now it was too plain to be disputed. Defeat was written in the burned and disabled pahs, in the ruined farms, in the confiscated lands of their ancestors, which they had no power to redeem. This, however, was in strict accordance with Maori usage, with the law and custom of Rauparaha, of Hongi Ika, of Te Waharoa, those ruthless conquerors and their ancestors who had ravaged and annexed the lands of tribal foes from time immemorial. *Væ Victis* was one of the oldest of human laws. It was theirs also. One grim feature of a returning and successful expedition, the train of downcast or weeping slaves, driven along with blows and shouts of derision, was wanting in this campaign. No heads of chiefs or warriors were tossed out or stuck on poles as village after village was passed. No bound captive was handed over to the relations of the fallen for slow and dreadful torture. On the contrary, all the combatants, save those convicted of murder or outrage, were dismissed to their homes, while their wounded were tended in the hospitals of these

strangely constituted pakehas with the same care and skilfulness as their own.

At Te Ranga was the last stand made by the Maori for the possession of the lands of his forefathers. No more might he roam whither he would by river and mountain, by lake, shore, or forest stream. The white man's axe rang ceaselessly in his ancient woodlands ; the white man's fields, his crops and fences, raised barriers to free untrammelled wanderings from sea to sea. Only in allotted districts, marked out by the white surveyor, would he be permitted to live out his life. Even there, the white man's school, the white man's church, the white man's policeman, would be always with him. In the place of the chief who administered justice and delivered sentence without remonstrance, without appeal, there sat the white man's magistrate, hearing evidence which he did not always understand, fining and imprisoning for offences against laws of which they had neither experience nor comprehension.

This was the state of matters to which the Maori nation had come in the opinion of the older men of the tribes, and not a few of the younger warriors who had never quite given in their adhesion to the rule of the stranger. Haughty and tameless as a race, showing by a thousand instances their preference for death before dishonour, such was their state of feeling at this time, that had there been any other land available, they would probably have trooped away in one great migration like the Moors out of Spain, there to learn to forget their hopes and fears, their triumphs and their despair, far from the snow-crowned ranges, the rushing rivers, the fertile valleys,

and fire-breathing mountains of their own loved land.

On the whole, perhaps, it was as well for them, and by no means to the injury of the usurping pakeha, that the ever-girdling sea forbade a national exodus. Stern foe as the Briton has ever been while the fighting lasts, he is the most just and merciful of the world's conquerors. Of the great Roman, when the sandals of his legions trod over the prostrate peoples of the inhabited earth, it is recorded that he permitted them such personal and civic liberty as they had rarely enjoyed under their own rulers. Still, the privilege and boast of uttering the magical words, *Civis Romanus sum*, had to be paid for largely, as in the Apostle Paul's case. More liberal still, the Briton presents his beaten foe with the priceless gift of his equal laws, his equal suffrage. The ægis is thenceforth held over him, as of a blood-brother and a peer, a citizen of that world-wide empire scarce arrested by the poles, which rules and guards by its laws so large a proportion of the inhabitants of our planet.

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While the high contracting parties were settling important points to be observed in the treaty, now necessary after the unconditional surrender made in person by, and signed by, Wirimu Tamehana Te Waharoa, the interests of private persons had their opportunity of consideration. In the ranks of the Forest Rangers doubts were still expressed respecting the fate of one Roland Massinger, reported missing since the affair of the Gate Pah.

Slyde and Warwick were lying in hospital, severely wounded, still too weak to undertake personal search.

Warwick, who was near him when he fell, had information to give which, if it accounted for his wounds, was calculated to inspire doubts concerning his safety.

"He was shot from behind," he said. "I am as certain of it as that I lie here; it was the act of that skulking scoundrel Ngarara. I was near him at the time. Von Tempsky himself was hardly a foot in front of him as he was trying to spring on to the parapet, when I heard a shot behind us on the right flank. Mind, the troops were standing forward for a bayonet charge, and the covering volleys were on the left flank. It surprised me, so that I looked round; there I saw a band of the Ngapuhi that had dashed up in advance of the main body. Sheltering himself behind a tree, I saw Ngarara. He had missed the first time, but had reloaded. I caught sight of his face for a moment as the second report came, and Mr. Massinger fell forward on his face. Before I could turn towards him I was knocked over by a bullet from a rifle-pit, and knew no more. But a ranger who was close to me at the time, and helped to carry me to the rear, heard Mannering shout out an order, upon which several of the Maketu men closed round Massinger and carried him off. Following them up, he was sure that he saw two women. These he didn't recognize."

"Shouldn't wonder if one of them was the girl he was philandering with at the Terraces. Heard she was with her father's *hapu*. Princess and wounded knight business. Turn up all safe by-and-by."

"I'm not so sure," mused Warwick. "He's a treacherous dog, that Ngarara. He'll have another

try before he gives in—unless the chief shoots him, which he's very likely to do, on sight."

"Summary justice," said Mr. Slyde. "Points in savage life, after all. Come to think."

"I *saw* him do it once," said Warwick. "I was a boy then. He shot a Maori dead who had helped to murder a white man before the fellow's friends."

"What did the tribe say?"

"Nothing—though there were many of the man's relations present. They knew he was in the wrong. Besides, the act was that of a *chief*. That means a good deal in this country."

"Seems it does. Power in the land. Must look up one with an eligible daughter. A hundred thousand acres of the Waikato land would be a snug dowry. Live like a baron of the Middle Ages. No more beastly reports to write. Tell my directors to go to the reinga."

"How long is it before the doctor says we shall be fit to travel?" said Warwick, wandering from the point.

"Three weeks at farthest. I vote we go on the scout for Massinger. Can't leave him in the tents of the whatsynames—Amorites or something. Dance at his wedding if we can do nothing else."

"I'll see it out," said Warwick.

"So we will, dear boy," said Mr. Slyde. "Have Ngarara's scalp. Revival of ancient customs. Must have rational amusement now the war's over."

What did really happen to Massinger was this. He felt himself struck under the right shoulder from behind by a hard blow as from a stone, such being the sensation of a bullet-wound from undoubted

personal evidence. Before he had turned round to see who had given him such a hurt, he felt a queer faintness, and noticed a stream of blood running down his breast, while the evil face of Ngarara, lit up with revengeful triumph, glared at him, partly covered by a huge kawaka tree.

Before he could combine the concrete and the abstract sufficiently to formulate a theory, "darkness covered his eyes," and a sudden death rehearsal was in full operation.

When he recovered his senses, the night was so far advanced that he glanced upward to the stars with a half-conscious, wondering doubt as to his condition and circumstances. On a rude litter, formed of branches and twisted flax, the bed of grass and fern-leaves beneath him being by no means uncomfortable, he was moving slowly along a forest path, on which four bearers were trying to carry him as smoothly as circumstances would admit of. Two women in native dress walked in front, in one of whom, as she stopped to speak a word to the bearers, he had no difficulty in recognizing Erena.

After an answering sentence from the bearer nearest him, she held up her hand, and the little party halted. Coming close to his head, which he was as yet unable to raise, she looked anxiously in his face, and in softest accents said—

"You have awakened."

The loss of blood had been great, but by some styptic known to the natives, a people much acquainted with wounds of all degree of severity, it had been arrested. He tried to speak; a faint inarticulate murmur was all the reply he could furnish. He raised

himself; but the effort was too painful, and again he became unconscious.

When he awoke once more he was aware that locomotion had ceased, and that he was lying upon a couch covered with mats. All was darkness, with the exception of flickering gleams thrown from a fire which was lighted at the entrance of the vault or cave in which he was lodged. Becoming more used to the dim uncertain light, he discerned the limestone walls and roof, which were festooned with stalactites in all sorts of fantastic, delicate shapes. There was a sound as of falling water, so that the difficulty of assuaging thirst would not be among the privations suffered by the inmates of this singular retreat. After a while he was relieved by the appearance of his good angel, as he felt impelled to call her.

"Tell me," he said, "how has all this come to pass? I am anxious to hear about the fall of the Gate Pah, and the way I have been removed to this place."

"I knew," she said, bending over him with the frank tenderness of a woman who loves passionately, and does not fear to disguise the fact, "that if you remained longer where you fell you would stand a chance of being tomahawked, if not worse treated. My father gave the order for you to be carried off, and at the same time signed to me that I and my cousin Riria were to accompany you. The cave in which you find yourself is only known to our hapu, and has always been regarded as being impenetrable to any one not acquainted with the secret approach."

"But it was evident to me," said he, "that I was shot through the body. How was the flow of blood stopped, and the wound found not to be dangerous?"

"We were told," she said, "that it was not mortal by a well-known tohunga of our tribe, who has been left a stage behind. He will be here to-morrow, and is a medicine-man of some repute, I can assure you. He applied a styptic, which was successful, and found that the bullet-wound, though it had grazed the lung, would not be dangerous, though hard to heal."

"I owe everything to you, dearest Erena," he said, pressing the hand which lay nearest to him; "and the life you have saved is yours for ever. If I come scatheless out of this war, you will have no reason to doubt my gratitude. How shall I ever repay you?"

"It is only too easy to do so," she said, as she gazed at him with eyes that glowed with all the intensity of a woman's love, for the first time awakened in that passionate nature. "But you must not talk of gratitude," she continued, with a smile, "or I shall begin to doubt whether you love me as *we* love —in life, in death, to the grave, and beyond it."

As she spoke, she wound her arms tenderly around him, and, kissing him upon the forehead, hastily left the cave.

When she reappeared, bringing such food as the natives had been able to secure, she said—

"Now you must eat all you can, and grow strong, as the sooner we leave this 'Lizard's Cave,' as it is called, and get back to my father, the better. I know that he will make for Rotorua as soon as the fighting is over."

"Tell me about the Gate Pah," he said. "Our men were falling fast, were they not?"

"Indeed, yes. Nearly all the officers were killed

or mortally wounded in less than a quarter of an hour. Colonel Booth died next day; the captains of the 43rd were all killed, besides naval and volunteer officers. The natives had determined to retreat by the rear of the pah, but suddenly found themselves met by a detachment of the 43rd. They rushed back, and, mingling with the soldiers, were taken by them for a Maori reinforcement. Some one called out "Retreat!" and the troops, having no officers, were seized with a panic, made a runaway—what you call a rout of it."

Massinger groaned. "Who could have imagined it! Such a regiment as the 43rd! Think what they did in the Peninsular war! Such things will happen from time to time. Why didn't they *starve* them out?"

"That was what my father and Waka Nene said. They were surrounded. They had no water, and only raw potatoes to eat. In a few days they must have given in. In Heke's war Colonel Despard made just the same mistake. My father and Mr. Waterton were there."

"Tell me about it."

"Well, of course it was long, long ago—in 1845; but I heard my father tell it once, and never forgot it. You heard of the Ohaiawa Pah, and how the troops were repulsed then?"

"Yes; I read some account of it."

"It was like this fight. The pah was strongly defended, and the colonel said he would take it by assault. My father and Mr. Waterton were fighting along with the Ngapuhi under the chief Waka Nene. They came to the colonel, and my father said, 'Colonel Despard, if you are going to try to take the

pah by assault before you make a breach—and you have no artillery heavy enough—I consider it amounts to the murder of your men, and it is my duty to tell you so. The chief Waka Nene is of the same opinion.'

"'What does he know of the science of war?' said the colonel, angrily.

"'More than you do—that is, of Maori war,' said my father.

"'How dare you talk to me like that?' said the colonel, now very angry. 'I have a great mind to have you arrested.'

"'What does the pakeha rangatira say?' inquired Nene of Mr. Waterton, as he saw that something serious was likely to happen.

"'He says he will arrest us,' said Mr. Waterton.

"Upon this the chief walked forward, and, looking in the colonel's face, placed an arm on either of their shoulders. Then he said quietly—

"'These are *my* pakehas. You must not touch them;' and he looked round to his tribe, drawn up rank by rank at the foot of the hill."

"Well, and what happened?"

"The colonel turned away and said no more. The Ngapuhi tribe were loyal to the English, and have been ever since. They would never have conquered Heke without them."

"So he did attack the pah?"

"Yes—by bad fortune. The old chief drew his men off, and would not join in the assault. The soldiers and sailors, also the volunteers, tried to storm the pah, but were beaten back with dreadful loss. Many were killed, and some taken prisoners. The natives left the pah the next night, but it was a boast

of Heke's tribe for years after that they had beaten back a pakeha regiment of renown, and that some day, if all the tribes would unite, they would drive the whites into the sea."

"It was well for us that they did not unite, by all accounts," said Massinger; "for their numbers were greater than ours then by many thousands. Now it is the other way, and unless they make peace their doom is sealed."

"You must not talk any more," said Erena, with playful authority. "Old Tiro-hanga will come up to-morrow, and then he will say if you can be moved. You had better try and go to sleep."

* * * * * *

The war was now virtually over. The Waikato tribes and their allies, the Nga-tiawa and the Ngati-haua, had surrendered unconditionally. The wounded warriors, Slyde and Warwick, were in a condition to be moved to Auckland, where rest and comfort awaited them. The military surgeon, in releasing them from camp quarters and fare, advised them to take advantage of all the comforts of civilization, which he believed would effect a more speedy cure than any of the resources of his profession.

"You've had a narrow shave, both of you," he said—"particularly Warwick. When I saw him first, I hardly thought he was worth carrying to the rear. We were short of bearers, too; not like those infernal natives who have so many women about, full of pluck, and handier than the men for that matter. By-the-by, what's become of that young friend of yours? It's rumoured that the Ngapuhi carried him off. Beautiful daughter, and so on. Romantic—very."

"Odd thing. Don't know where he is," said Mr. Slyde. "Warwick here means to go on the scout as soon as his blessed wound heals. We're getting anxious."

"I'm not," said Warwick. "Depend on it, if Erena Mannering has him in charge, no harm will come to him. Not a man of the Ngapuhi but would die in his defence, always excepting that brute Ngarara. We don't know who were killed at Orakau and who got away yet. As long as he's above ground neither Massinger nor Erena are safe."

"Seems badly managed, don't it," yawned Mr. Slyde, "when so many a good fellow has gone down, that reptile should escape? Hope for the best, however. Feel inclined to help Providence the next time we meet. Awful sleepy work this recovery business. I must turn in."

* * * * * *

Some anxiety might have been spared to his friends if they could have beheld Mr. Massinger at the moment of their solicitude. The sun was declining; the shimmering plain of Rotorua lake lay calm and still, save for a lazy ripple on the beach below the room wherein the wounded man lay, on a couch covered with mats of the finest texture. Beside him sat Erena, regarding him from time to time with that rapt and earnest gaze which a woman only bestows on the man she loves or the child of her bosom. He had rallied since the first days of his wound, but the pallor of his countenance, and his evident weakness, told those of experience in gunshot wounds that the progress of recovery had been arrested. In such a case the danger is worse, say the authorities, than in the first loss of blood and organic injury. The patient

moved as if to raise himself, but desisted, as if such effort were beyond him.

"I cannot think," he said, "why I do not gain strength. I do not seem to have improved in the least; rather the other way. I wonder if there is any injury we don't know of."

"Pray God there is not!" she said, bending over him, and bathing his forehead. "My father says he never knew old Tiro-hanga's medical knowledge to fail. He says you only want time to be as well as ever. How many wounds has he not recovered from?"

"I should be more than willing to believe him," said the sick man. "But why am I so wretchedly weak? I feel as if I would like to die and be done with it, if I am to lie here for weeks and months. But I am a beast to complain, after all your goodness, child," he went on to say, as the girl's eyes filled with tears. "Please forgive me; I am weak in mind as well as body."

"Is my love nothing to you?" she cried, with sudden passion. "My life, my life—for it hangs on yours? If you die, I die also. I swear I will follow you to the reinga, as my mother would have said. I will not remain behind. Do not doubt of that."

As she spoke she moved nearer to his couch, and, throwing herself on her knees at his side, took his hand in both of hers, and, bowing her face upon his breast, burst into a tempest of sobs, which shook every portion of her frame.

Massinger, touched and partly alarmed by her grief, tried by all the means in his power to soothe her, smoothing her abundant hair the while, as it flowed over him in a cascade of rippling wavelets.

"My darling, my darling!" he said, "I owe my life to you, and it shall be spent in proving my love and devotion. You must not despair, you who are so brave. I am afraid you are not an Ariki, after all, but only a woman—the best, the bravest, the dearest, in the world. This is only a passing faintness. We shall live to spend many a glad year together."

"It is I who am weak," she said, lifting her tear-stained face, and essaying to smile as she drew back the long silken tresses from her brow. "Something seemed at that moment to warn me that I should never live to claim your love. I have often felt it. But, if *your* life is spared for long years to come, I shall not mourn. No, no! But you will never forget your poor Erena, who loved you—loved, yes, you will never know how much!"

As she spoke her last words, she rose to her feet, pressed one lingering, passionate kiss upon his forehead, and was gone.

With the dawn the tohunga arrived. This important and mysterious personage, of which one was always to be found in the larger sections of a tribe, combined the offices of priest and sorcerer with the more practical profession of the physician. Unquestionably, his knowledge of simples and general surgery was far from despicable. By incantations and spells, it was thought in the tribe that he had foreknowledge of the death or otherwise of his patients. As a soothsayer he had now used the powerful spell of the "withered twigs." Chanting a *karakia,* with a sudden jerk he broke off from the tree two of equal size and length. The piece he held in his left hand

snapped off short. The longer twig remained in his right.

"The pakeha will not die," he exclaimed. "My art has saved him. It will be good for the Ngapuhi tribe, and for the maiden Erena, whose mother I so much loved."

Arriving at the couch of the stricken pakeha, he looked upon him with solemn and mysterious regard. He felt his pulse, and minutely scrutinized the cicatrice of the newly healed wound. Meanwhile the eyes of the girl, dilated with terror and anxiety, watched his inscrutable countenance, as the mother of the sick child in more conventional abodes fixes her gaze on the physician, whose words contain the issues of life or death.

"Speak, O Tiro-hanga! Say whether he will die —and I also. One word will serve for both."

The tohunga placed his hand upon the shoulder of the excited girl, whose every nerve seemed quivering, as if the tension of mind and body had exhausted the limit of human endurance.

"As you are, so was your mother in her youth," he said, speaking with deep though restrained feeling in the Maori tongue; "in those days when the tall pakeha rangatira, came to Hokianga from Maketu— he whose arm was strong as the lancewood of the hillside, and whose counsel was wise in the day of battle. I would have killed him, though my own life was forfeit, had I not seen that *she* would follow him to the reinga. But I could not cause a hair of her head to be harmed, such was my bondage to her *mana*. And you, O pakeha, will I save, likewise, for her sake. Comfort yourself, O Erena; the pakeha will not die."

"Is it so? Truly do you say it?" almost gasped the frenzied maid. "Is there anything more that we can do? Have you the healing medicine for him?"

"I will prepare the bitter draught for him—that draught which will bring a man back to life, though the jaws of death were closing over him," said the tohunga. "When the sun is high, a change will come upon him."

"Are you sure? Are you indeed aware that he will begin to gain strength?" she asked eagerly. "He has been so terribly weak, and was beginning to lose heart."

"Did the daughter of the Toa-rangatira ever know my saying to prove false?" asked the priest, haughtily.

"Oh, no—no!" she rejoined hastily. "But tell me more. Shall we be able to carry him to the homes of his people? And shall we be happy afterwards?"

"I see," said the sage—"I see the pakeha standing among his people; he is well; he is happy; joy is in his face—in his voice. But there is blood—blood through it. I can see no more. There is a mist—a darkness. The future is hidden from me."

"A bad omen," said the girl, sadly. "You saw blood, O Tiro-hanga! But I care not for myself, so that *he* be safe and unharmed."

"Such is the woman who loves," mused the tohunga, as he stalked moodily towards the shore of the lake—"of whatever colour or race, in the old days as well as in this present time, when chiefs are falling like withered leaves, and the pakeha drives the tribes to their death, as the wild-fowl on the warm lakes. And what cares she if the whole island is delivered to the stranger, and we become his slaves? All her thought

is for the recovery of this pakeha, whom, till ten moons since, she never set eyes upon."

With this moral reflection concerning the "eternal feminine," the substance of which has been stated by less recent philosophers, the magician of the period betook himself to the raupo whare set apart for him, where he remained long in deepest meditation, none of the humbler members of the tribe daring to disturb him.

He stayed till the close of the following day, to watch the effect of his potion, and finding that Massinger professed himself unaccountably improved in mind and body, directed that in three days the patient should commence his journey to the Oropi missionary settlement, and departed mysteriously as he had arrived.

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The day was drawing to a close when a cry from one of the Maori converts at the mission station of Oropi informed the inmates of the approach of strangers. Cyril Summers and his household still clung to their lodge in the wilderness, in spite of the disquieting rumours that evil was abroad, that murder and outrage were still possible. As a matter of history, it has always been stated that, even after the official surrender of an enemy, and the disbandment of troops, guerilla bands capable of the wildest excesses are formed, recruited from the more desperate ruffians, whom only the stern punishments of martial law could hold down. Accustomed to comparative licence, often tacitly condoned in time of war, and being—to give them their due—often recklessly daring, their offences against discipline are leniently judged. But when the excitement

and the prizes of the campaign have been removed, the period of enforced repose often appears to the restless warrior of either side a season especially arranged for the payment of outstanding grudges, or the plunder of isolated homesteads. To the malevolent and treacherous Ngarara, devoured with jealousy of the pakeha preferred before him, it appeared as though the demons of wrath and revenge, worshipped by his ancestors, had delivered his rival into his hands. Infuriated at hearing of his removal and partial recovery, he had, by means of spies and kinsfolk, kept himself well informed of Erena's movements. Fearing that the wounded soldier would be withdrawn from his powers of injury, he resolved upon a bold stroke, by which he could free himself of his rival, and possess himself of the girl, for whom he was but too willing to sacrifice life itself.

Hypatia, ever alert to encounter the day's labours or adventures, had been the first to hear the announcement of the arrival. With Mr. Summers, she walked towards the small party which, emerging from the forest, came slowly along the path to the homestead.

"These are strangers," said he, looking earnestly at the *cortége*. "Three or four women, not more than a dozen men, and some one, either weak or wounded, carried in a litter. Who can they be? To what tribe do they belong?" he asked of the Maori servant woman who had followed them.

"Ngapuhi," said she confidently. "Rotorua natives, some of them, going to the coast with sick man."

"Who is the girl walking by the litter?" asked Hypatia, with quickened interest. "She is taller than the other women."

"Most like Erena Mannering. Not sure ; but walk like her. Half-caste she is, daughter of war-chief. Pakeha rangatira, belong to tribe all the same."

"Now, I wonder if this can be Lieutenant Massinger?" said Summers. "He has not been seen since the Gate Pah affair. This Erena Mannering was reported to have carried him off, when he fell fighting bravely beside Von Tempsky. His place of refuge may have become insecure ; for that or other reasons they may wish to reach the coast."

Hypatia made no reply, but, walking quickly with her companion, reached the bearers of the invalid, as the girl, signing to them to halt, accosted Mr. Summers.

"You are the missionary of Oropi?" said she, in perfectly good English, spoken with a purity of intonation not always remarked in the colonists of presumably higher education. "We are bringing a Forest Ranger who was badly wounded at the Gate Pah to the coast. Will you kindly allow us to rest for a day? He is very low, and much fatigued by the journey."

As she spoke, Hypatia fixed her eyes, with feelings alternating between astonishment and admiration, upon this altogether amazing young person. Dressed, or rather draped, like the native women who formed part of the escort, without covering to head or feet, the simple attire rather heightened than disguised her beauty. Her free and haughty carriage, utterly unconscious as she seemed of her unconventional attire, the splendour of her glorious eyes, startled Hypatia, while her graceful pose as she turned to explain the situation reminded the English girl of the statue of Diana which she had seen in the Pitti palace at Rome.

As the two girls faced each other, with the half-

inquiring, half-challenging regard of the partly conscious rivals of their sex, they would have formed a contrast, rarely met in such completeness, between the finished aristocrat of the old world and this wondrous embodiment of all the womanly graces, reared amid the lonely lakes and wild-wood glades of a far land.

Alike in beauty, though one possessed the blue eyes, the abundant fair hair, the delicate rose-bloom of the mother isle; the other the ebon tresses, the flashing eyes, burning from time to time with a strange lustre;—alike their classic figures and graceful movement, each might have stood, had there been a painter in attendance, as the realization of the glories and graces of early womanhood.

Hypatia took the initiative. "Of course Mr. Summers, all of us indeed, will be too happy to be of service in such a sad case. And what is the name of the wounded man? I am very pleased to meet you."

"And I also," said the Maori maiden. "You will speak to him, will you not? Perhaps you may have seen him before."

Walking to the litter, a rude but efficient couch, Hypatia looked down upon the wounded soldier, who tried feebly to raise himself. The wasted form and drawn features of the sick man startled her, while in the bearded face and pallid brow, from which he feebly essayed to push back the clustering curls, she almost failed to recognize Roland de Massinger.

For one moment she gazed in horror and dismay, then taking his wasted hand and bending over his couch, the once calm and self-repressed Hypatia Tollemache covered her face with her hands and wept like a child.

"You know each other," said the forest maiden,

in a deep low voice. "I thought perhaps it might be *you*—you for whose sake he came to our unhappy land, for whose sake he now lies, perhaps dying."

"Erena!" said the sick man, "what are you saying? Surely you are not angry with Miss Tollemache? Is it her fault that I loved her once? Let it be sufficient that now I love you. Give me your hand."

With a look of ineffable tenderness, she gave her hand obediently as does a child.

"Miss Tollemache—Hypatia," he said, "she saved my life; will you not be friends?"

A brighter gleam came into the tearful eyes of the English girl. "You are more noble than I," she said. "His life has been given to you, to save and retain. Let us be sisters."

They clasped hands with the fervour of generous youth, ere the passions that rend and ravage have darkened the spirit. As their eyes met, the wounded man looked up with a faint smile.

The state of Massinger's health necessitated more than one day's sojourn at Oropi. However, on the following morning a marked improvement had taken place, so that it was decided in council that a farther stage might be reached on the way to Tauranga after the day's rest. The sufferer had been allotted the chief guest-chamber, a modest apartment, but exquisitely clean, whence looking forth on the mission garden, the fruit trees and old-fashioned English flowers recalled that beloved home-land which he had almost despaired of seeing again.

At the evening meal Erena, who had caused one of her dusky handmaidens to bring from the camp a mysterious package, appeared in European costume.

Quietly but well dressed according to the fashion of the day, it was a revelation to her entertainers and to Hypatia to mark the ease and self-possession which she exhibited in her new part. The soft rich voice, the perfect intonation, the repose of her manner, through which but an occasional flash of emotion showed itself; the total absence of gesture which, in her other habiliments, seemed natural to her;—all these, as Hypatia admitted to herself, placed this antipodean maiden on a perfect equality with the best specimens of European society. When together they saw to the comfort of their patient, nothing could have surpassed the good taste and delicacy of her ministrations. Without making parade of proprietorship in the helpless sufferer, she assumed the rank of his *fiancée*, appearing equally confident of her companion's acceptance of that of friend and well-wisher.

In the case of many other women, her frank trust might possibly have been misplaced. But the justice and generosity which were the leading qualities of Hypatia Tollemache's nature, rendered her perfectly safe as a companion, precluded by every impulse from conspiring against her happiness.

As for Mrs. Summers and her husband, they were completely fascinated by her, holding that the reputation which she enjoyed for beauty and intelligence was even less than her due.

Hypatia, it may be, in the seclusion of her chamber, reflected, as other maidens have been known to do, on perhaps the too hasty dismissal of a lover so brave, so loyal, in every respect so worthy of woman's holiest devotion. She had, against her heart's inclination, against his fervent appeals, resolved

to give her life to the regeneration of the race, to the reform of the social system, to the alteration of a condition of things which the efforts of saints, philosophers, rulers, and prophets throughout nearly two thousand years had failed materially to change. "Who was she," it now seemed to be inquired of her, by an inward voice that would not be stilled, "that she should presume to expect to move this colossal structure, so firmly rooted in the usages of immemorial custom?"

In her first efforts, she had been discouraged and disillusioned. In this her second endeavour, what had she effected? As a direct result of her hasty and inconsiderate action, Massinger had abandoned home and friends, rushed away for distraction to this Ultima Thule, at the very end of the habitable globe, where he was now lying between life and death. And, as if that was not a sufficiently dolorous conclusion, his life had been saved by the courage and devotion of another woman, to whom his faith was justly, irrevocably pledged. The full bitterness of her position was reached, when she acknowledged to herself that in her heart of hearts she was now conscious of feelings which before she had only suspected.

But Hypatia Tollemache, strong and deeply seated as were her primal emotions, was no love-sick girl to bewail herself over the inevitable; to chafe to morbid unrest against Destiny, that ancient force, which even the gods of an earlier world were powerless to disturb. No! "a perfect woman nobly planned," she accepted the blame of her mistaken act, as it now appeared to her, and facing, as she had full many a time and oft done before, an uncongenial part in life's mysterious drama, resolved to follow unswervingly the path

marked out for her by duty and principle. Was she to falter, to fail, because the unexpected had happened; because life's thorny path had become difficult, well-nigh impenetrable? "If thou faint in the day of adversity, thy strength is but small," said the wise king. More than once in time of trial had she braced up her courage by recalling the warning. Once more she looked the conflict of the future firmly in the face, and leaving her chamber with fixed resolve and earnest prayer, felt a renewed confidence in her ability to withstand, to undergo, whatever trials might be in store for her.

On the following morning, which had been fixed for the departure of the sick man and his attendants, it was evident that another day would be required for restoring his strength, which had been much drawn upon by the journey. He was most anxious to proceed; but Mr. Summers, who was not without some knowledge of medicine, as well as practical experience, distinctly forbade his removal. "It would be most dangerous," he asserted; "and at least twenty-four hours' additional rest was required before the patient could think of pursuing the journey." Mrs. Summers also pleaded with Erena, who, though manifestly anxious to reach a place of safety, consented to remain one more day.

"Do you think there is danger?" asked her gentle hostess. "I thought the war was all over."

"The fight at Orakau is over, the last stand at Te Ranga was made in vain; but the war is still in the hearts of the Waikato and the Ngaiterangi," said the Maori girl. "My father has enemies, and I, even I, have those who wish me evil. There is one whom

I fear for *his* sake"—here she intimated the room wherein Massinger lay. "It is hard to know where he will strike."

"But do you think he would come here?" said Mrs. Summers, turning pale. "We have never done anything but work and teach and pray for the welfare of the natives."

"When blood has been once shed, there is little thought of good or evil. And besides the old custom of revenge, a new religion has sprung up among the tribes, called the 'Pai Marire.' They have a false prophet, Te Ua, who persuades them that the pakehas are doomed to destruction. They also carry about with them the head of an officer of the 57th, whom they surprised at Ahuahu, and perform sacred rites around it."

"What a dreadful thing!" said Mrs. Summers, rapidly approaching a state of terror and amazement. "But surely they have always spared the missionaries?"

"The new teaching is that all the missionaries are to be killed," said the girl. "We have heard that Mr. Grace has been threatened, and Mr. Fulloon's house burned."

"But will not the troops protect us?" urged Mrs. Summers. "I thought they were quite close now?"

"They have marched to Te Awamutu. I was told so by a native woman yesterday," said Erena. "She said, besides, that Ngarara, the man who has sworn to revenge himself upon Roland, is out with a *taua*, or war-party, and may at any time surprise us."

"I suppose that is the reason you were so anxious to get on?"

"Partly, yes. And, besides, I did not wish to bring trouble on your household. But we must go

forward to-morrow, and perhaps what I am afraid of may never come to pass."

The day was mild and pleasant, though a louring sky had promised otherwise in the early part of the morning. Massinger was able to be moved into the sitting-room, and there, refreshed by his morning meal and the change of situation, declared that he felt strong enough to travel in the afternoon.

"We have arranged otherwise," said Erena, with a mock assumption of authority. "One day will not make much difference. I am going to the camp for an hour, so I will leave you to the care of Miss Tollemache." Here she smiled playfully at Hypatia, who had just entered the room. "I dare say you are anxious to have a talk together."

"How trusting and unsuspicious she is!" thought Hypatia. "Having once received his troth, she is absolutely sure of his fidelity. She has a noble nature, and, from me at least, she need not fear any disloyalty."

Mrs. Summers had already left the room. Then the man and the maiden who had last met under such widely different circumstances in another land, were once more free to have speech, undisturbed by the presence of onlookers.

But for this forest nymph, so sweet, so strong, so impossible to condemn, how differently even yet might their romance have ended! But the knight was in the toils of the Queen of Faerye, and to Elfland he must fare, under pain of death, or transformation to a being that even *she* could not recognize. A creature false to his plighted troth, ungrateful to the girl who had saved his life at the risk of her own, whose love he had won. A love not transient and

fleeting, like so many affected by the women of his race, founded upon vanity, ambition, greed of wealth or rank, but changeless, immortal, strong as death, true to the grave, even to the dark realm beyond it.

Hypatia had probed and purified her heart, and she felt, though she loved him now with a force and passionate feeling hitherto unsuspected, that she could not for worlds have accepted his hand, even had he offered it.

They were now two different people. She, after trial, change, and the bitterness of lost illusions, had vowed herself to the life-devotion which succeeds the sanguine expectation of mighty work among the heathen. He, the haggard, war-worn soldier, sick unto death and sore wounded—ah! so unlike the trim sportsman and correctly attired country gentleman of the old half-forgotten life.

He was the first to speak. She gazed on him with the pitying tenderness of womanhood shining through her troubled eyes.

"A strange meeting, Miss Tollemache, in a strange land!" he said, with a brave attempt to smile. "Rather a change from Hereford here! Who would have thought of seeing *you* here, of all people?"

She made haste to reply, lest the unshed tears should resist all efforts to control them. She would have thrown herself on her knees by the side of his couch and clasped his wasted hand, had she dared to give vent to her feelings. Then she spoke lightly, though her mouth quivered with the effort.

"Isn't it hard to say where you may fall in with any given man, or woman either, if it comes to that, in these exciting days?"

"Certainly you are the last person I ever expected to see here," he made answer, half musingly. "In New Zealand of all places, and at this particular mission station!"

"It is easy of explanation. I was tired of London life—disillusioned, if you will. You prophesied it, you may remember; and hearing from my old schoolfellow, Mary Summers, that she was hard pressed for help in her work, took my passage, and here I am."

"So I see," he replied gravely. "And from what I have heard lately, I heartily wish that you were anywhere else."

"But, surely, if there be danger—and I suppose you mean that—I have no more right to be shielded than another."

"Mrs. Summers, whom I deeply respect, has followed her husband in the path of a plain duty. But why *you*, without ties or adequate reason, should have volunteered for this forlorn hope, I cannot comprehend. It is the personal sacrifice which has a charm for some women, I suppose," he went on.

"And for some men," she retorted, "else why should *you* be here, wounded almost to the death in a quarrel in which you had no share, and which I believe in my heart you consider unjust. When will men come to understand that women differ widely among themselves, and are attracted, even as they are, by novelty and adventure?"

"Mine is only a man's answer, and scarcely logical either, but it is the best I have. I came to New Zealand because I could not live in England. Like you, I had lost a world of hope, trust, and fond illusion. This war was commenced without my consent

or support, but finding myself between two camps, I chose the British one."

"It was very natural," she said with a sigh. "But tell me of yourself. How were you wounded, and why did you not remain at the camp?"

"I should have remained there altogether," he said, with a flickering smile, "had it not been for Erena and her two cousins. We met with a reverse at the Gate Pah, and every man that fell near me was tomahawked within two minutes. These girls rushed in through a hail of bullets and dragged me into the high fern, where I lay safely until some of the Ngapuhi joined them. They carried me to a cave only known to the tohunga and a few individuals of the tribe."

"And after that?"

"I found next morning that the bleeding had been stopped and the wound bandaged. Since then I have been terribly weak, but am now recovering slowly, *very* slowly. To-day I feel better than I have done for some time past. I shall pick up as soon as we reach the shore."

"May God grant it," she replied. "If it was through any act of mine that you quitted home and friends, I should feel that your blood was on my head. When I think of your renunciation, I cannot help doubting whether any woman is worth the sacrifice. And now we must say farewell. You are to leave at dawn, I hear; so if we are doomed never to meet again, think kindly of Hypatia Tollemache, and believe that you have her best wishes, her prayers."

As she spoke she held out her hand, which he clasped in his; so thin and wasted was it that the tears rose to her eyes. He pressed his lips passionately to it, and relinquished the slender fingers with a sigh.

It was late when Erena returned. The little household was assembled at the evening meal when she entered the room, and, declining to join the repast, stood with a countenance troubled and darkly boding before she spoke. So might Cassandra, as she stood before the Trojan host in high-walled Ilion.

"Bad news!" she said abruptly. "So bad that it could hardly be worse. This Hau-Hau sect is gaining ground. They are carrying round Captain Boyd's head to stir up the tribes; they have murdured Mr. Volkner, and are marching towards the coast. No one can tell where they will strike next."

The countenances of the women blanched as this announcement was made. Mr. Summers, though visibly affected, preserved his composure, as he asked where the dreadful deed took place.

"At Opotiki," said Erena. "He came in a vessel, though he was warned not to do so. He and Mr. Grace, another missionary, were at once taken prisoners, and Mr. Volkner was hanged on a willow tree by Kereopa; the tribe assenting."

"Is there any chance of their coming here?" said Mr. Summers. "We have never had the slightest altercation with the tribes. I have been here since 1850, and every thought of my heart, every word from my lips, has been with the object of their benefit. No chief would permit such an outrage, such an unheard-of crime."

"You do not know Kereopa," replied Erena. "He is one of those natives who go perfectly mad when their blood is up, and think no more of killing any man, woman, or child near him than you people do of wringing the neck of a *kea*. Besides, Te Ua,

who has declared himself to be a prophet, boasts of a message from the angel Gabriel, that the sword of the Lord and Gideon is committed into the hands of the Pai Marire, with which to smite the pakeha and the unfaithful Maoris. But I have sent one who will put Ropata on their track; if *he* comes up with them, they will learn more of Old Testament law."

"A day of rebuke and blasphemy, murder and outrage," groaned Cyril Summers. "And is this to be the end of our labours? I feel inclined, though it is putting one's hand to the plough and turning back, to make for the coast until matters are more peaceful. What do you intend to do?"

"My people and I, with Mr. Massinger, will start at midnight," said the girl, decisively. "I wish now that we had left this morning. I implore of you to leave with your family at the same time."

"But the road in the darkness?" said Summers. "The forest is difficult to thread by daylight."

"To our guide," said Erena, "the night is as the day. We shall keep on steadily until we reach Tauranga."

"I am tempted to join forces with you," he said. "But no! we must show the natives that we believe what we have taught them—that God is able to save those who trust in Him. Mary, Hypatia, you had better go with Erena's party, and take the children."

The delicate form of Mary Summers seemed to gain height and dignity as, with all the devoted courage of her "deep love's truth" shining in her steadfast eyes, she said, "I have but to repeat the words I spoke in the church where our lives were joined—'till death do us part.' My place is by you, my darling, here and hereafter. May God protect us all in this dread hour!"

"And Miss Tollemache?" said Erena, addressing Hypatia. "Will *you* wait for the coming of the Hau-Haus—to be carried off as a slave, perhaps?" and here her piercing gaze seemed to read Hypatia's inmost soul. "You do not know what that means; I do! Taunts and blows, water to draw, burdens to carry, degradation unspeakable!"

The English girl drew herself up and returned the fixed regard of the daughter of the South with a look as unblenching as her own, ere she answered, calmly, almost haughtily—

"When I promised my friends to be a fellow-labourer with them, I made no reservations. I have cast in my lot with them, and will share their fortunes, even to the martyr's death, if it be so ordained."

Erena watched her with an expression of surprise which changed to frank admiration.

"Farewell, O friends," she said; "may God protect you from all evil. As for you, you are worthy of his friendship, of his *love*."

As she made the last gesture of farewell, she stooped, and taking Hypatia's unresisting hand, raised it to her lips and glided from the room.

It was no time for sleep. Praying and conversing by turns, the household awaited the departure of the little band. From the verandah they watched the bearers emerge from Massinger's room with the couch. This they placed upon the litter on which he had lain for so many a weary mile. They saw Erena take her place beside it as the bearers moved silently away. A dark form glided before them on the narrow path, the *cortége* followed through the darksome arches of the forest, and was swallowed up in the midnight gloom.

After their departure, the household engaged in prayer. When Cyril Summers addressed the Almighty Disposer of events in earnest supplication that His servants might be spared the last terrible penalties of savage warfare, it cannot be doubted that each hearer's inmost heart responded most fervently to the appeal. Mrs. Summers wept as, with her hand in her husband's, she echoed his cry for deliverance, and rising from her knees with streaming eyes, threw her arms around Hypatia's neck.

"We have brought you into these horrors," she said. "Oh, why did I ever encourage you to come to this fatal shore?"

From Hypatia's eyes there fell no tears. An intense and glowing lustre seemed to burn in her deep blue eyes, as she gazed into the distance, as one who sees what is hid from ordinary mortals. One could fancy her a virgin martyr in the days of Nero, receiving her summons to the arena. Unquestioning faith, dauntless courage, and an almost divine pity, made radiant her countenance as she looked on Mary Summers and her sleeping children.

"I am not afraid of what man can do to us," she said softly. "The God whom we serve has power to deliver us in this dread hour. Did not Erena say that a body of the Ngapuhi men were marching on the track of the Hau-Hau band? 'Oh, rest in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart's desire.' As her sweet voice rose, and the beautiful words of Mendelssohn's immortal work resounded through the room, a ray of hope illumined the forlorn household, as with a final hand-clasp all retired to their couches, though not to sleep.

CHAPTER XVI

THE hour before dawn, when "deep sleep falls upon men," found the whole household wrapped in that slumber which was the natural outcome of an anxious and exciting day. But the quick loud bark of an angry dog, subsiding into a sustained suspicious growl, and joined to a woman's scream from the camp of their native adherents, told Cyril Summers that the enemy was at hand. A confused murmur of voices, the trampling of feet, with the ordinary indefinable accompaniments of a body of men, aroused the sleepers with startling suddenness.

Mrs. Summers and Hypatia, like women on a sinking ship, displayed unwonted courage. Dressing themselves and the wondering children in haste, they joined Mr. Summers in the living-room of the cottage at the same moment that it was filled by an excited crowd of the wildest natives which any of the party had ever seen.

The leader, a ferocious-looking Maori, whom Mr. Summers had no difficulty in recognizing as Kereopa, advanced with threatening air towards him ; but, seeing that the missionary had no weapon, nor apparently the wish or means to defend himself, he halted abruptly. Behind him stood a crowd of natives, the

greater part of whom had advanced into the room, while others could be seen through the open door between the cottage and the outbuildings. Looking more closely in order to discover if by chance there were among them any of his former servants, Mr. Summers saw, to his horror and disgust, a white man. This renegade, dead to every feeling of manhood, a deserter from his regiment, was one of those abandoned wretches to be found in all new countries, who, associating with savages, encourage them in outrage and rapine. Outcasts from their race, aware that a speedy death by bullet or halter awaits them on capture, they have always been noted as the most remorseless foes of their own people.

Feeling, however, that by interrogating the man he might procure more accurate information than from the dangerously excited chief and his followers, he addressed him.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion at this hour? Ask Kereopa if he has not made some mistake."

The renegade, apparently pleased at being civilly addressed, translated the question, and repeated it to the chief, who in a loud and threatening voice replied—

"Tell the Mikonaree that I, a prophet of the Pai Marire, have received authority from the angel Gabriel to kill or take into captivity all the pakehas, with their wives and daughters, as did the Israelites with the Amalekites."

"Have I ever done you harm? Have I not taught your people to grow the bread-grain, the potato, the vegetables on which they grow strong and healthy?"

"What have you done—what have the white men done?" shouted the wild-eyed chief, now working

himself into an insane fury. "You have taught us your prayers and stolen our lands. You have given us the grain and taken the fields. Where are our brothers, our sons, our chiefs? Slain by your soldiers, after robbing them of their lands—even Waitara and Tatarai-maka. They are cold in the ground on which they planted and feasted, but which now only serves them for graves."

"Surely you would not kill people with no arms in their hands. Which of our missionaries has ever fired a gun even in defence of his life?"

"The priests of your people do not fight, but they act as spies; they have betrayed our plans to the pakeha general. They will all be killed, like Volkner, to show the world that we shall have no spies, no false prophets, no priests of Baal, amongst us. Prepare to die, even as Volkner died, whose head, with that of the pakeha Boyd, is with us. Let their hands be tied."

At once several eager warriors sprang forward, by whom the women and the missionary were seized. Their hands were bound behind them with strips of the native flax, which effectively rendered them helpless captives.

"You will die when the sun goes down," he said, indicating Cyril Summers. "Call on your God to help you. The rope is ready, and the tree on which you will hang, as did Volkner. But all are not here. Where is the wounded pakeha, and the Ngapuhi girl Erena?"

"They have gone; they went yesterday."

"Which path was theirs? If you deceive me, great suffering will be yours before you die."

"They went into the forest; that is all I can say. The God in whom I trust will save me from cruelty at your hands."

A native at this time said some words in the Maori tongue which seemed for the time to allay the wrath of the raging wild beast into which Kereopa was transformed.

"It is well. Their tracks will be found; Ngarara is a keen hunter when the prey is near. He is pursuing the Ngapuhi girl Erena, whose heart the pakeha soldier has stolen from him. He will cut *his* heart out of his breast and eat it before her eyes. I will give her to him for a slave. All the pakeha women shall be slaves to the men of the Pai Marire when the day of deliverance shall come. *Hau-Hau, Hau-Hau, Hau-Hau!*"

Here the countenance of the half-insane savage became changed into the likeness of a ferocious beast, as he yelled out the war-cry of the sect, which was immediately caught up and re-echoed, dog-like, by every individual in the maniacal crowd. With eyes almost reversed in their sockets, with tongue protruding, with the foam flying from his lips, and every human feature lost in the bestial transformation, he resembled less a human being than a monstrous demon from the lowest pit of Acheron.

Mrs. Summers fainted, the children screamed piteously, and Cyril made one step forward, as if, even with his fettered hands, he essayed to do battle with the destroying fiend. He was immediately seized by two powerful natives, who had been standing near him, and forced back to his former position. Realizing his utter helplessness, he groaned aloud as he

saw Hypatia bending over his wife's drooping form, while she adjured her to preserve her presence of mind for the sake of the terrified children and her unhappy husband.

"We shall need all our strength to carry us through this ordeal," she said. "We need it for prayer and faith, which, even in this dark hour, will save us."

As she spoke, the brave spirit of the devoted wife and mother recalled her to life and consciousness. She gazed on the strange surroundings of their once peaceful home, and after giving vent to her emotions in one wild burst of tears, resumed her efforts at composure.

Fortunately for the overwrought feelings of the captives, a diversion at this critical moment was effected through an unusual noise beginning among the natives clustered beyond and around the open door. A cry, whether of warning or triumph, came from the forest path ; gradually it swelled into greater distinctness, until it resolved itself into the well-known shout of triumph which proclaimed the capture of an enemy of note. It was then seen, by the full dawn light now breaking through the masses of gloom, to proceed from a body of men emerging from the forest. The leaders of the party were dancing and singing with an exuberance which betokened victory and triumph. When the whole body debouched from the wood, it was seen to have in its midst a litter borne by four men, beside whom walked a girl with haughty and defiant mien. She looked more like a barbaric queen than a captive taken in war, as her fettered wrists showed her to be. Her attendants had been similarly treated, with the exception of the bearers, who were so closely surrounded that their

escape had been considered improbable. By the time they had reached the open space behind the cottage, the whole party, including Kereopa, had quitted the room, and joined in the tremendous volume of triumphant yells and cries which rent the air.

"Let the pakeha wahine come forth and look upon their friends," said Kereopa, with devilish malice. "They will see how the prophets of the Pai Marire obey the message of the angels, how the sword of the Lord and Gideon is made sharp for the evil-doer, and how the convert from the Ngapuhi is rewarded in the hour of victory."

Fearful of further violence, Cyril Summers had partially supported his wife, followed by the shuddering children, to the porch, around which in happier days he had pleased himself with training a clematis. Hypatia stepped forward with wide eyes, as expectant of instant tragedy. Almost unheeding of her own danger, and the fearful position in which all were placed, she could not repress her interest in Massinger, as with almost equal eagerness she looked at Erena. He lay back on the rude pillow which had been placed below his head, deathly pale, and only exhibiting consciousness through his heaving breast and the movements of his eyes. But when she turned her gaze upon the dauntless form of Erena Mannering, all womanly jealousy was obliterated by the glow of admiration which the girl's regal bearing and fearless spirit evoked in her. She moved among the fierce crowd of half-doubtful, half-bloodthirsty Hau-Haus with the air of a princess among pariahs. Upon those who pressed closely to her side she from time to time bestowed a glance of scorn and menace, accompanied

by a few words in their own tongue, from which they shrank as from a missile. Her eyes blazed as they were turned upon Kereopa, who with sneering smile approached her, pointing to the half-inanimate form of Massinger.

"The pakeha is sick; the pakeha is tired," he said with affected regret. "It is wrong that he was carried so far. His wound must be unhealed. The Pai Marire grieve. *He will not stand the fire well*, to-morrow. There will be a *haka* too, in honour of Ngarara's marriage, which he must first witness."

"Dog of the Hau-Haus!" said the indignant maiden, with all the scorn and wrath of a line of chiefs shining from her storm-litten eyes. "Speak you to a war-chief's daughter of the Ngapuhi as to a slave-woman? What false tohunga have ye, that thy doom and that of thy herd of swine is concealed from thee? See thy future fate, as in that darkening cloud, coming nearer and yet nearer!" As she spoke, she pointed to a thunder-cloud which, after the mists of the morning, had gathered size and volume, and was now moving with the course of the dawn-wind towards them. Such was the majesty of her mien, such the tragic earnestness of her tones, as she stood, like a priestess of old, denouncing wrong and oppression, that the crowd, deeply superstitious as is the race, turned instinctively towards the approaching phenomenon; and when the thunder rolled, and the jagged fire-stream issued from the ebon, a shuddering sound was audible, which showed how deeply fear of the supernatural was rooted in the native mind. "Behold!" said the fearless, inspired maiden, as she raised her hand and pointed to the sky, "the Atua

of the Storm has spoken! Beware how you touch a hair of our heads. Shed the blood of these pakehas, who have never done your nation aught but good, who are now helpless in your hands—torture this sick soldier—and not a man here will be alive when the moon is dark!"

As Erena uttered the words of doom, she paused for a moment, while the audience gazed around, as if waiting for some physical manifestation in answer to her words. Kereopa preserved his expression of malicious unbelief, as though willing to torment his captives with all the dreadful uncertainty which might comport with a treacherous delay. Glancing at him for a moment with unutterable scorn, she left her position, and, moving to the side of the litter, gazed into the face of the sick man with anxious tenderness.

But it was evident that the natives generally had attached more meaning to her words than could have been expected. She had stirred their blood and aroused their superstitious fears. This killing of pakehas, except in fair fight, had always been regarded as unlucky. Terrible penalties had been exacted, even when the offence in war-time had seemed to them trifling and unimportant. Then, this Erena Mannering was the daughter of a man more fierce and implacable even than their own warriors—a war-chief of the Ngapuhi, and as such likely to exact a memorable revenge. The Pai Marire was only of recent date. There were even now rival seers and prophets, as in the case of Parata, who withstood Kereopa, and had bitterly reproached him for the barbarous murder of the missionary Volkner. There was a movement of doubt and opposition afoot, which

was evidently strengthened, as an aged warrior came forward and addressed the natives.

"Men of the Pai Marire," he said, "let us beware of going too far in this matter, lest we offend a more powerful Atua than those of the Hau-Haus, whom we knew of but a short while since. If we kill the soldiers of the pakehas, who have killed our sons and brothers"—here the old man's features worked convulsively—"taken our lands, and burned our kaingas, that is just, that is *utu*. But to kill the Mikonaree, who fights not with guns or swords, who teaches the children the booka-booka, who heals the sick and feeds the hungry, that is not *tika*. The Atua of the Storm has spoken." Here another volley of heaven's artillery shook the air, as the lightning played in menacing proximity to the disturbed and upturned faces of his hearers. "Beware lest worse things than the slaughter of chiefs at Te Ranga happen to us."

A strong feeling of indecision was now apparent in the excited crowd, who but an hour since were eager for blood and flames, the death of the men, the leading into captivity of the women and children. It is possible that the mass vote of the Hau-Haus would have gone against Kereopa, who was not an hereditary chief of importance, only an obscure individual, lifted by superior cunning and energy to power in disturbed times. But at that moment the malignant face of Ngarara was seen to emerge from among the last arrivals, and his voice was heard.

"Men of the Pai Marire, listen not to the words of age and fear! He speaks the words of the pakehas and their lying priests. The prophets of the Pai Marire have foretold that the Hau-Haus are to rule the land,

to drive the pakeha into the sea, whence in an evil hour they came, to inhabit their towns, and to take their wives and daughters as slaves. Even now, the Ngatitoa are marching to Omata, whence they will capture Taranaki with all the pakeha's treasure. It has been foretold that the Pai Marire shall increase as the sands of the sea, that all the tribes shall join from the Hokianga to Kororarika. I have left the Ngapuhi to follow the Pai Marire, and I know that the tribe, except a few old men, have resolved to abandon Waka Nene and his pakeha friends, and to give the young chiefs authority to lead. You have but to join the march to Waikato, and the land of Maui is yours again."

"You have well spoken," shouted Kereopa, whose fierce visage was now aflame with wrath, and the half-insane gleam of whose eyes told of that fanatical ecstasy which is akin to demoniacal possession. "The land will be ours, the pakeha's treasures shall be ours; his women shall work in our fields and carry burdens, even as the women of the South were wont to do after our raids. Place the head on the *niu*, and let the war-dance begin. The angel has again spoken to me, and I am commanded to cause the sword of the Lord and Gideon to be reddened with the blood of the Amorites."

Then commenced a scene of savage triumph, appalling, revolting, almost beyond the power of words to describe. The fury of the excited natives appeared to have transformed them into the brutish presentments of the herd of animals which surrounded the fabled enchantress. The head of the unfortunate Captain Boyd, raised on a pole planted in the ground, was surrounded by a yelling mass dancing around it,

with fiendish gestures of rage and derision. All likeness of manhood seemed obliterated, and the ancient world would seem to have been reproduced, with a company of anthropoids devoid of human speech, and capable only of the purely animal expression of the baser passions.

What the feelings of the forlorn captives were, thus delivered into the hands of the most remorseless foes of their race, can scarcely be imagined or described. They deemed themselves at that moment to be abandoned by man, forgotten of God. A dreadful death, horrors unspeakable, degradation irrevocable, awaited them. Like a fated crew awaiting their doom upon a sinking ship, all sensation was perhaps deadened, absorbed in despairing expectation of the last agony immediately preceding death.

The Christians summoned from their cells to the arena in the reign of Nero must have had like experiences. Alike the agony of despair, the doubt of Eternal Justice, the shrinking of the frail flesh about to be delivered to the hungry beasts of prey, the torturing flame, the gloating regard of the pitiless populace. All these were apparently to be their portion in this so-called civilized century, this boasted age of light, of freedom, of art, and intellectual environment.

Similar thoughts may have passed through the mind of Hypatia Tollemache, as she recalled her classical studies, and saw the blood-soaked arena of the Roman amphitheatre before her, of which the essential features were now in rude and grotesque presentment.

And had it all come to this? Was all the labour, the self-denial, the toilsome day, the weary night, the exile, the home-sickness, but to end thus? Not for

herself did she mourn, perhaps, so much ; not for the warrior maid, whose high courage and inherited traditions enabled her to defy insult and brave death. They had courted the danger and must now pay the price. With Massinger, too, his chief regret would be that he could not stand in the ranks as at Rangariri and Orakau, dealing death around, and fighting breast to breast with the ruthless foe. And though death by tortures, dreadful and protracted, such as all had heard of in old Maori wars (and it was whispered around camp-fires was not wholly obsolete), was gruesome and unnatural, still it was, in a rude sense, the payment lawfully exacted by the victors. But for these mild and gentle teachers of the Word, who had, for nearly a decade, wearied every faculty of mind and body in the service of their heathen destroyers, it was indeed a hard and cruel fate. She saw, in imagination, Cyril Summers dragged to the fatal tree, with the rope around his neck, as was that steadfast servant of the Lord, Carl Volkner. She saw the ashen face and stricken limbs of Mary Summers, as, all-expectant of her own and her children's fate, she would witness the death and mutilation of her beloved partner. What was the mercy, the justice, of that Supreme Being to whom they had bowed the knee in prayer since infancy, where was an overruling Providence, if this tragedy was permitted to be played out to the last dreadful scene ? Where, alas ! could one turn for aid or consolation ?

Such thoughts went coursing through her brain, mingled with such curious and even trifling observation, unconsciously made, as during the fast-fleeting moments of life have often been noted to occupy the mind. She looked mechanically at the war-dance

still being performed by the exulting savages, varied by the devilish rites, if such they could be called, performed around the dead officer's head, which with awful eyes appeared to stare down upon the unholy crew. Cyril Summers and his wife were kneeling in prayer ; the children, having exhausted themselves in weeping, were examining the *débris* of their household gods. Hypatia herself, with her masses of bright hair thrown back from her face, and carelessly tied in a knot behind her head, was leaning against the door-sill, in position not unlike the Christian maiden in a great picture, where each martyr is bound to a pillar in the amphitheatre, when she saw Erena move more closely to Massinger's couch and whisper in his ear. The Maori guard was temporarily occupied, as an expert, in noting the evolutions of the war-dance, and had relaxed his watch. The sick man lay motionless, but the languid eyes opened ; a gleam of hope—or was it the fire of despair ?—was visible, with a slight change of expression.

" She knows something ; she has told him," thought Hypatia, as she moved cautiously but slowly, and very warily, within hearing.

At this time the supreme saltatory expression of triumph was being enacted. The noise was deafening, so that the clear tones of Erena's rich voice were audible.

" This is nearly the end of the war-dance ; then the murders and the torture will commence. The torture will last all night ; they will take out Roland and tie him to a stake, cutting pieces of flesh from his body. Poor fellow! there is not much on his bones. As for us, we shall be carried away to the Uriwera country."

" You want to frighten me to death," said Hypatia.

"What dreadful things even to speak of! Can we not kill ourselves? I never thought I should wish to do that. I can now feel for others who have done so."

"They have prevented it. Our hands are tied. There is no river here; no precipice, or we could throw ourselves over, as our women have often done."

"You seem strangely indifferent, Erena. I cannot think you heartless; but on the verge of death, or a captivity infinitely worse, surely you cannot jest about our position?"

"Far from it. My whole heart is quivering with excitement and anxiety; for *his* life, which I value a thousand times more than my own, is trembling in the balance. But, after all, I do not really think these dreadful things will come to pass."

"Why? What reason have you?"

"You remember that I came in late, the day after our arrival—on the day when I wished to go on with our journey?"

"Now I do remember. You looked as though you had been a long way."

"I had indeed. I went back on our tracks very nearly as far as the cave where Roland lay concealed, when we brought him away from the Gate Pah. I thought I might meet some of my father's people, who would have made short work of these bloodthirsty Hau-Haus. But he had gone off towards Opotiki, as a report had come of another rising. But luckily I met some one, and it will go far to save our lives."

"Who was it?" asked Hypatia, breathlessly.

"It was Winiata. He had heard of these Hau-Haus being on the march, and that Ngarara had persuaded Kereopa to follow us up."

"And what aid did he give you?"

"Merely this—that a body of Ngatiporu were following up this *taua*, led by the most dreaded warrior in all New Zealand, Ropata Waha Waha."

At the mention of this name, so well known throughout the length and breadth of New Zealand—

> "In close fight a champion grim,
> In camps a leader sage"—

Hypatia could hardly repress a cry of joy.

"Then perhaps we may be saved, after all."

"If he comes in time; and God grant he may. He should be very close now. And I know Winiata will travel without rest or food till he strikes his trail. And yet I have a foreboding that one of us will die. So said the tohunga, whose words never failed yet. I cannot shake off the feeling."

"You have overworked yourself," said Hypatia. "You can have had little rest, food, or sleep since you left yesterday. It is the result of fatigue and anxiety."

"Anxiety has too often been my lot," said the girl, with a deep accent of sadness. "But fatigue I never felt yet. These wretches are spinning out their dance. They had better make the most of it. If all goes well, it is the last some of them will ever join in. Now, listen! Do you hear nothing?"

Hypatia bent her ear towards the forest, and listened with all the eagerness which the situation demanded. A faint murmur once, and once only, made itself audible.

"It is the sound of the breeze among the pines," said she at length.

"Listen again! Do you hear nothing?"

"Only a far-off sound like the rippling of the river. Once I thought I heard the trampling of feet; but it must be a mistake."

"It is no mistake," said Erena. "I hear the steady tramp of a large body of men; and so would these fools, if they were not too much occupied with their absurd dance, which they intend to finish up with blood. And so it will; but not as they think."

The war-dance, with its stamps and roars, its shuddering hisses and accurate evolutions as if of one man, was drawing to a close. Already one of the foremost warriors, at a sign from Kereopa, had placed a rope round the neck of Cyril Summers, who had commenced in a final prayer to commend his soul and his loved ones to the protection of their Maker, when a shout from a number of unknown voices made the forest ring, and caused the crowd of Hau-Haus to turn their faces in that direction. At the same moment a close and well-directed volley was poured in, which laid fully one-half of them low, and wounded a much larger number. Then a man stalked calmly forward, sword in hand, whose sudden apparition created as much consternation among the Hau-Haus as if he had been a Destroying Angel specially commissioned for their extirpation. One look at the stern features and martial form of him who stood calm and unmoved amid the pattering hail of bullets, with which the Hau-Haus strove to return the fire, was sufficient for most of the Pai Marire. With a wild cry of "Ropata Waha Waha!" which came tremulously from their lips, they fled in all directions in a state of the most abject terror. And well might they or other rebels take panic at the sight of him who

stood exposed to danger, both from friends and foes, as though the thick-flying bullets were thistledown.

The hostile tribes were fully of opinion that he bore a charmed life, that no shot had power to harm him, probably in consequence of Satanic influence. Hence his *sobriquet* of Waha Waha was strangely suggestive of an unholy alliance between the Prince of Darkness and the cool strategist and remorseless warrior, to whom fear and mercy were alike unknown. A target for the best marksmen in a hundred fights, himself chiefly unarmed, he had never received a wound or spared an enemy. As he stood there, with an expression of scorn and concentrated rage upon his expressive features, with dripping sword and blazing eyes, he might well have stood for a portrait of an avenging angel, or indeed Azrael, the minister of Death, in all his lurid majesty.

Kereopa and his principal followers, who had fled at the first onset, probably thought that they had a fair chance of escape. But Ropata, with his usual astuteness, had formed a cordon around the Hau-Hau band, into which the surprised natives ran, only to find themselves shot down or captured. Among the latter were eleven members of his own tribe, the Aowera. Of these he proceeded to make an example upon the spot. Calling them out of the group of captives by name, he thus addressed them—

"You are about to die. I do not kill you because you are found in arms against the pakehas. But I forbade you to join the Hau-Haus. You have disobeyed me; you must now pay the penalty."

Having revolvers handed to him, he then shot every man with his own hand.

"Bring forward the deserter."

The soldier, a man of the 57th, bound and helpless, was then led up.

"You," he said, addressing the renegade, "are a disgrace to your regiment and to your country. You are said to have shot two of your own officers in battle. You have helped these natives to commit crimes which are a thousand times worse than open war. You will kill no pakehas or natives after to-day."

With the instinct of a born leader, Ropata had taken in the various points of the situation at a glance, and issued his orders with the promptitude which the crucial moment demanded.

"Release the pakehas. Kill that Hau-Hau dog holding the rope, and hang up the deserter with it; he is not worthy of a soldier's death. Bind that Ngapuhi; he shall answer to his own chief."

These orders, coming from a man who rarely had occasion to speak twice, were obeyed on the instant. The amateur executioner was tomahawked before his surprise permitted him to drop the rope. Cyril Summers was freed, and the deserter was run up to the branch of the willow tree destined for his martyrdom. The cords which bound Erena and her attendants were loosed by willing hands, the men and even the women promptly possessing themselves of weapons from their dead captors.

Ngarara's countenance, when he saw himself at once baulked of his revenge and cheated of his prey, was a study of all the evil passions which degrade the human race to the level of the brute. Such is the phrase, unfair indeed to the animal creation, which, however unsparing in its allotted course of action, is

never guilty of the calculated cruelty of *la bête humaine*. For one moment he stood indifferent to his coming fate as Ropata himself; then, drawing his revolver, fired point-blank at Massinger, who had raised himself to a sitting posture with Erena's assistance, and was watching the conflict with an eagerness which betokened a partial renewal of strength. As he raised the weapon Erena flung herself before her lover, with an instinctive movement of protection. Passing her right arm around his neck, she lowered him to his pillow, with all the heroic tenderness which from time immemorial has characterized the woman as nurse and ministering angel. With a grin of fiendish malice Ngarara parried the tomahawk blow aimed at him by a blood-bespattered Aowera, and, eluding his clutch, dashed into the forest and disappeared.

* * * * * *

The fray was over. The Hau-Hau prisoners were securely bound. Sullen and despairing, they stood in a circle on the spot where their war-dance and the Pai Marire rites had been performed. The derision of their captors was openly expressed. The bodies of their comrades and relations lay around in all the hideous abandon of the death-agony. From the tall pole the head of the ill-fated soldier still stared with eyeless sockets and bared teeth on the ghastly scene—it might have been fancied with grim triumph and exultation; while from the willow tree dangled the corpse of the deserter, an unconscious witness, where he had so lately posed as an actor.

As if the dreadful spectacle had a fascination which they could not resist, or that their miraculous deliverance had rendered them incapable of connected

thought, the destined victims had remained almost in their positions taken up previous to the arrival of Ropata and his contingent.

Mrs. Summers had sunk down on a sofa which had been dislodged from its position, with her children, wondering and tearful, beside her. The female attendants of Erena were clustered around their mistress. Cyril Summers, over whom the bitterness of death had passed, stood by his wife, gazing with awe-struck eyes into the distance, while his moving lips from time to time gave token that he was returning thanks to that Almighty Being to whom he had appealed in his darkest hour. While Hypatia, wrapped in a world of strange and awful phantasy, still stood by the outer entrance of the porch, looking straight in front of her, at this weird melodrama of human life, in which the reality so often transcends the unrealities of the "fantastic realm."

Erena and Roland Massinger had preserved their position unaltered, except that, from one of support, the girl gradually sank forward, until her head rested on her lover's breast. A cry from one of the Maori girls arrested the attention of all. Hypatia, roused from her trance, rushed over to find two of them raising Erena from her reclining position, with looks of alarm, while the arterial blood which welled up from her bosom told of a mortal wound. Massinger's death-pale countenance, stained with blood, as were the coverings of his couch, seemed to denote that these lovers, thrown together by such fortuitous circumstances in life, were fated to be undivided in death.

Though Massinger was unwounded by the bullet which, aimed with fatal accuracy, had pierced the

bosom of Erena, his situation was most critical. For her there was no hope. The lung had been perforated ; the laboured breathing showed but too truly that death was imminent. In Massinger's case the appearances were hardly more promising. The rude treatment to which he had been subjected after his capture had caused the partly healed wound to break out afresh. He was rapidly approaching the state of mortal weakness to which Erena was succumbing. Such was only too probable ; but Cyril Summers, who had gone through a course of instruction in surgery, was enabled to stop his bleeding, and to afford temporary relief to Erena.

Massinger at first resented the proffered aid. "Why trouble me?" he said resentfully. "She has given her life to save mine ; it were base of me to survive her at such a cost. Let us die together. My life belongs to her, who has now saved it for the third time."

"Then it is mine to dispose of," came the answer, in her low rich tones. "I die happy, since you are saved. If the bullet of Ngarara had found your breast instead of mine, I would have followed you to the spirit-land. You do not doubt that—oh, my darling—my own beloved! The sun would not have gone down before I should have commenced my journey to the reinga."

"Erena," said Massinger, "have I ever doubted your love, true alike in life and the dark realm, to which we are hastening?"

"Raise me," she said, "that I may see his face once more. My eyes are darkening. Oh, my beloved!" —and her soft voice faltered, and became hollow and inexpressibly mournful—"I have loved you with every

fibre of my being, with every motion of my heart! The pakeha girl loves you also, though she cared not to own it, in her own land. She will live for you in the days that are to come—days of peace and happiness, now that the war is over. Would she die for you as I have done? Yes; for she is noble, she is true. She would have scorned to take your love from poor Erena, even had you offered it. Her soul lay open to me—and yours. You were true to your word. She was too proud to steal your heart from the poor Maori girl. And now, farewell—farewell for ever—oh, my loved one! I die happy. I have given my life for yours —what does a daughter of the Ngapuhi wish more?"

She leaned forward and hid her head on the breast of her lover, while her long black tresses flowed over his pillow, as her arms strained him to that faithful bosom, still warm with the heart's purest feelings. Reverently the little group of spectators gazed on the dying girl. Sobs and lamentations came from the women of her own race, while tears flowed fast from the eyes of Mary Summers and Hypatia.

Raising herself for a moment, she motioned to Hypatia to come nearer. Her dark eyes glowed with transient light as she kissed her hand; then laying it in that of Massinger, she whispered—

"He is yours now. May all happiness befall you! Yet forget not—oh! forget not—poor Erena."

A deep sigh followed the last words. Her head fell back; the hand which Massinger and Hypatia held was pulseless. The faithful spirit of the nymph of the wood and stream, the fabled Oread of the old-world poets, had passed away.

* * * * * *

The tragedy at Oropi, so nearly completed, might have been averted, but for an unlucky accidental circumstance, the occurrence of which embittered the remainder of Allister Mannering's life. And yet he could not wholly abandon himself to self-accusation and ceaseless regrets, inasmuch as he had quitted the trail on which, as the avenger of blood, he was pursuing the Hau-Hau band, in order to save the lives of innocent and helpless people.

He, indeed, with his contingent, would have arrived at Oropi on the same day as Ropata, or, perhaps, earlier. He would then have been able to prevent the preliminary sufferings of the missionary household, and could have ensured the safety of his beloved daughter and only child. The cause of his leaving the direct track to the mission station of Cyril Summers was sufficiently imperative—such as, indeed, no man of ordinary humanity could disregard.

A panting messenger, speeding along the track from Whaka-tane, arrived with the news that another band of Hau-Haus had killed the crew of the *Jane* schooner at Opotiki, had murdered Mr. Fulloon, and captured the Reverend Mr. Grace, whom there was every reason to believe they intended to murder.

It was not known to Mannering at this time that there was any likelihood of Kereopa's band being in near proximity to Erena and her wounded charge. By ordinary computation she should have reached Tauranga several days before that bloodthirsty fanatic could have overtaken her party. Cyril Summers and his household, having been warned by the bishop, would probably have moved into one of the coast settlements.

Thus one danger was contingent, the other was a

pressing and instant summons. Life and death were in the decision. Murder and outrage, perhaps, even now, had taken place. The full complement of horrors could only be averted by a forced march and the sudden appearance of his *hapu* upon the scene. "Angel of God was there none" to whisper that loved daughter's name, darling of his heart, apple of his eye, that she was? Was there no mysterious spirit-warning such as, if tales be true, has often, through invisible sympathetic chords, eliminated time and space? Did not the traditional second sight, inherited from Highland ancestors, and of which he and Erena claimed their portion, prove faithful in that dread hour? Long afterwards—in years when he could talk calmly of his loss, dwell upon her courage, her beauty, and extol her intellectual range—he confessed to his closest friend and comrade that he had felt, from the time he turned aside to Opotiki, an overshadowing, inexplicable gloom and despondency. He was convinced in his own mind that (as he said) some dreadful deed had taken place, or was even then about to happen. Therefore he was hardly surprised, after hours of feverishly fast travelling, to find Mr. Volkner's mutilated corse beneath the willow tree which he had himself planted. Mr. Grace, after being in hourly expectation of a violent death, had been rescued by Captain Levy, one of the survivors of the crew of the *Jane*, and put on board H.M.S. *Eclipse*, Captain Fremantle.

Burning with wrath, and maddened with the doubt as to whether Erena and Massinger might not even yet be within the region traversed by the Hau-Hau scouts, Mannering made a forced march, halting neither by day nor night, rendered still more furious

and despairing by the freshness of the trail, leading straight for the Oropi mission station. Kereopa had sworn, as rumour had it, that he would kill the third Mikonaree pakeha and carry off his wife and children as a prey, before proceeding to join the Kingites in the sack and plunder of Auckland.

It was midnight when the mission was reached. An unwonted stillness reigned; no dog barked, no voice was heard from the native camp—an unusual state of things within his experience, the wakeful Maori being always ready for converse at any hour of the night. The mission house itself was partially closed only, but silent and deserted. The trim garden was trampled over. The shrubs and fruit trees had been broken down. The keen eyes of the Maoris discerned a spot where the ground had been disturbed. A short search exhumed more than one body, on which bullet and tomahawk had written the history of the engagement. The furniture in some rooms was intact, in others recklessly broken up. A handkerchief, a shoe, a neck-ribbon, told of recent occupation. One article of female Maori headgear, a plume of the beautiful *huia*, the distracted parent recognized as an ornament of Erena's.

Meanwhile, like questing hounds, the Ngapuhi warriors traversed the surrounding thickets with all the keenness of a savage race. Imprints and signs, so faint as to be almost invisible to the white man, told all too plainly to them the history of the occupation of the Hau-Haus, the arrival of Ropata and his men, the fight (if such it could be called) and finally the departure of the whole party, including the family, the victorious contingent, and the prisoners, in full march for Tauranga.

Hoping against hope, yet with a cruel doubt eating at his heart, Mannering sat with his head between his hands for a stricken hour, before he gave orders for his troop to be in readiness to march, when the Southern Cross pointed towards dawn. Long before the stars had paled, he strode fast and eagerly at the head of his faithful band, on the well-marked Tauranga track.

It was past midday when they arrived. The place was astir, the streets were filled. There was murmur of voices, and that indescribable feeling in the air as of woe, or death imminent. Such was the conviction which smote the strong soul of Allister Mannering as, with his warriors ranked in battle line, he joined the throng, evidently converging towards a lofty cliff, which reared itself above the harbour.

An enclosure in which shrubs were in luxuriant growth now came into view, and marble columns showed themselves amid the dark green foliage. It was the cemetery.

The truth flashed across him. He had been afraid to ask. Was it, could it be, the funeral procession of his darling daughter—of Erena, the bright, beautiful, fearless maiden, whom he had so lately seen in the pride of her stately maidenhood and joyous youth? Lovely and beloved, was it possible that she could be now, even now, before his haggard eyes, borne to her tomb? He gazed on the little band of mourning girls who carried the flower-decked coffin. The native attendants of the missionary family walked behind with Mrs. Summers and Hypatia, while Cyril Summers, in full canonicals, with another clergyman, the army chaplain, preceded the *cortége*.

Behind them, again, came a company of the 43rd with their officers, another of the 68th, and the Forest Rangers, with Von Tempsky at their head. Also Messrs. Slyde and Warwick, who had been granted special leave for that day only by the army surgeon, looking weak and pale after their enforced seclusion.

Then came the native allies, the Arawa, the Ngapuhi, the Ngatiporu, all stern and warlike of appearance, proud to do honour to the maiden whose mother was of their race, with the blood of chiefs in her veins, whose descent could be traced back to the migration from Hawaiki.

Those who knew of the love, so deep, so passionate, which subsisted between the daughter and the sire, could partly realize the dull despair, the agonizing grief, which filled his heart at the moment. But none of the ordinary signs of sorrow betrayed the storm of anguish, the volcanic wrath and stifled fury, which raged within. His stern countenance preserved a rigid and awful calm. His voice faltered not as, walking forward when the *cortège* halted, he respectfully made request that the coffin-lid should be raised.

"Let me look upon the face once more," he said, "even in death, that I shall never see again on earth."

His request was granted. He stooped, and raising the cerecloth, gazed long and fixedly on the face of the dead girl. Then moving forward, he signed to the clergyman to proceed with the service, remaining uncovered until the last sad words were, with deepest feeling, solemnly pronounced.

As the irrevocable words were spoken, and the clay-cold form, which had held the fiery yet tender soul of Erena Mannering, was lowered into the grave,

a tempest of sobs, cries, and wailing lamentation, until then repressed, burst forth from the Maoris in the great gathering. Then Mannering slowly turned away, and after dismissing his following, accompanied Mr. Summers. From him he learned the full particulars of the Hau-Hau invasion—of their captivity, their fearful anticipation of death by torture, the sudden appearance of Ropata and his warriors, their miraculous escape, and the death of Erena in the very moment of deliverance.

"She gave her life to save that of the man she loved," said Mannering. "Her mother, long years since, did the same in my case. She is her true daughter. It was her fate, and could not be evaded. She had the foreknowledge, of which she spoke to me more than once."

Roland Massinger, on the way to recovery, but too weak for independent action, still lay in the military hospital.

Mannering, as he stood beside his couch, and gazed on his wasted features, looked, with his vast form and foreign air, like some fabled genie of the Arabian tale.

"She is gone," said the sick man, as he raised himself and held out the trembling fingers, which feebly grasped the iron hand of his visitor—"she is gone; she died in shielding me. I feel ashamed to be alive. I cannot ask your pardon. I was the cause of her death."

The rigid features of the father relaxed, as he watched the grief-worn countenance of the younger man, and noted the sincerity and depth of his despairing words.

"My boy," he said, "you have played your part nobly, as did she; and you have, by a hair's breadth,

escaped being buried beside her this day. She died for the man she loved, as only a daughter of her race can love. There must be no feeling but affection and respect between us. I mourned her mother as do you her daughter. Poor darling Erena! Oh, my child—my child!"

Mannering's freedom from ordinary human weakness deserted him here. He threw himself on his knees by the side of Massinger's bed, who then witnessed a sight unseen before by living eyes—the strong man's tears as he abandoned himself to unrestrained grief. Sobs and muffled cries, groans and lamentations of terrible intensity, shook his powerful frame. Weakened by his wound, and compelled to thus relieve his intolerable anguish, Roland Massinger's tears flowed fast in unison, as for a brief interval they mingled their sorrow. Then raising himself, and regaining the impassive expression which his features, save in familiar converse, ordinarily wore, the war-chief of the Ngapuhi bade adieu to the man whom he had looked forward to acknowledging with pride as the husband of the darling of his heart, the idol of his latter years.

"Fate has willed it otherwise," he said. "You may have happy years before you in your own land, with perhaps a wife and children to perpetuate your name and inherit your lands. I wish you such happiness as I know *she* would have done. Her generous heart would so will it, if she could speak its promptings from 'the undiscovered country.' In her name, and with her authority, knowing her inmost thoughts, I say—May God bless you and prosper you in the future path! In this life we shall meet no more."

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Kereopa and Ngarara had escaped ; but Ropata, who had started as soon as he delivered up his Hau-Hau prisoners, was hot on their trail. Kereopa, in spite of his keen and eager pursuit, fled to the Uriwera country, where he found shelter for a time, but led the hunted life of the outcast until it suited his protectors to betray him. Forwarded to Auckland, he was duly tried, convicted, and hanged.

Ngarara had a shorter term of comparative freedom. One morning, shortly after the attack on the mission, a small party of the Aowera appeared at Whaka-rewarewa, the main body of the tribe being encamped on Lake Rotorua. A bound prisoner was in their midst, on whose movements they kept watchful guard. It was Ngarara! A sub-chief, having been apprised of the capture, arrived with leading warriors. One glance at his stern features assured the captive that he had no mercy to expect. Contrary to Maori usage, he did not disdain to beg for it.

"I tried to kill the pakeha," he said. "What harm was there in that? He stole the heart of the girl I loved ; who, but for him and his cunning ways, might have loved me. I would have given my life for her. Other men have killed pakehas—Rewi, Rawiri, even Te Oriori ; why should I be the sacrifice?"

The chief listened with an air of disgust, but did not deign to reply. Meanwhile an order had been given, and the party marched on, taking the prisoner with them, preserving a strict silence, which evidently impressed him more deeply than any other treatment. In about three hours they arrived at the mission station of Ngae. Here a feeling of misgiving appeared to arise in the captive's mind, and he muttered the

word "Tikitere" with an accent of inquiry. But no man answered or took notice of his speech.

But when they reached that desolate and awful valley, and saw the mud volcanoes and steaming springs in furious motion, his courage failed him. He saw the hissing, bubbling lakes separated by a narrow ridge, aptly named the Gate of Hell, standing on which the traveller shudders, while breathing sulphuretted hydrogen and beholding the turbid waves on either side—the while the tremulous soil suggests the enormous power of the central fires, which at any time might rend and ruin all around with earthquake shock and suddenness.

He knew also, none better, of the dread blackness of the inferno, in which the sombre billows of a tormented sea of boiling mud are heaving and seething continually.

As with careful steps his guards half dragged, half carried him across the treacherous flat, seamed with fissures, where death lay in wait for the heedless stranger, he appeared to comprehend fully the fate that awaited him. He yelled aloud and struggled so wildly, even despite his bonds, that, at a motion of Ropata's arm, two stalwart natives stepped forward to the aid of their comrades as he neared the fatal abyss.

"Dog of a murderer, coward and slave besides," said the chief, as, halting on the brink, the guards awaited his signal—"a disgrace to the tribe which never was known to flee! Did Erena show fear when the bullet pierced her breast? Did the pakeha soldier shriek like the night owl when thy traitor's bullet struck his back—his back, I say, and he with thee in the same battle against the Ngaiterangi at Peke-hina?" Did the

pakeha girl, the white Rangatira, or the Mikonaree cry for mercy when Kereopa was ready to commence the torture? It is not fitting for thee to die the death of a warrior or a soldier. A coward's death, a slave's, a cur's, is thy only fitting end. Such, and no other, shalt thou have." He motioned with his hand.

A yell which made the deeps and hollows resound came from the unhappy wretch, as his captors lifted him on high and raised him for a moment above the Dantean abyss. As the miserable traitor fell from their grasp, he seized in his teeth the mat (*pureré*) of the nearest man, who, but for the prompt action of his comrade, might have been dragged with him into the inferno. But that wary warrior, with lightning quickness, struck such a blow on the nape of his neck with the back of the tomahawk hanging to his wrist with a leather thong, that he fell forward, nerveless and quivering, into the hell cauldron beneath. For one moment he emerged, with a face expressive of unutterable anguish, madness, and despair, then raising his fettered arms to the level of his head, fell backward into the depths of the raging and impure waves.

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"*Tutua-kuri-mokai!*" said the chief, as he gave the signal for return, and sauntered carelessly homeward. "He will cost nothing for burial. There are others that are fitting themselves for the same place."

* * * * * *

Cyril Summers with his family returned to England, rightly judging that, in the present state of Maori feeling, it was unfair to expose his wife to the risk of a repetition of the horrors from which they had escaped.

Hypatia accompanied them, unwilling to forsake her friend, whose state of health, weakened by their terrible experiences, rendered her companionship indispensable. On reaching England the Reverend Cyril was offered an incumbency in the diocese of his beloved bishop, now of Lichfield, in the peaceful performance of the duties of which he has found rest for his troubled spirit. His wife's health was completely re-established. Without in any way derogating from the importance of his work among the heathen, which, after having reached so encouraging a stage, had been ruthlessly arrested, he arrived at the conclusion that he had a worthy and hardly less difficult task to perform in the conversion of the heathen in the Black Country. His bishop acknowledged privately with regret that their savages, though not less truculent, were devoid of many of the redeeming qualities of the Maori heathen.

Roland Massinger remained in New Zealand until his health was thoroughly re-established, when, having received the welcome intelligence that Mr. Hamon de Massinger, an old bachelor and a distant relation, had left him a very large fortune, he so far modified his thirst for adventure and heroic colonization as to take his passage to England, where his lawyers advised that his presence was absolutely necessary.

Upon his arrival, he lost no time in visiting his county and looking up his friends, who made a tremendous hero of him, and would by no means allow him to deny astonishing feats of valour performed during the Maori war. He also discovered that his Australian successor, though most popular in the county, had become tired of the unrelieved comfort and too pronounced absence of adventure

in English country life. The sport, the society, the farming even, so restricted as to be minute in his eyes, all had become uninteresting to the ex-pioneer, not yet old enough to fall out of the ranks of England's empire-makers. These considerations, coupled with a fall in wool, and the rumour of a drought, widespread and unprecedented in severity, decided Mr. Lexington to return to the land of his birth.

His elder daughter had married satisfactorily, and settled in the county. "She had," she averred, "no ultra-patriotic longings. England, with an annual trip to the Continent, was good enough for her. She doubted whether George would care for Australia. Then there was the dear baby, who was too young to travel. She was truly sorry to part from her family, but as the voyage was now only a matter of five weeks by the P. and O. or the Messageries boats, she could come out and see them every other year, at any rate."

As for the younger girl, she began to pine for the plains and forests amid which her childhood had been passed. England was a sort of fairyland, no doubt. Climate lovely and cool, and the people kind and charming; but somehow the old country—that is, the new country—where they had been born and bred, seemed to have prior claims. She would not be sorry to see the South Head Lighthouse again and Sydney Harbour.

The eldest son had gone more than a year ago. He was very glad, he wrote, that he had done so. One manager had become extravagant; another had taken to drinking. Everybody seemed to think that they (the family) had left Australia for good. There was such a thing as the master's eye, without

doubt. Such had been his experience. He would tell them more when he saw them.

One of the reasons which actuated Mr. Lexington, a shrewd though liberal man in business matters, was a dislike to paying the income-tax in two countries at the same time. He could afford it, certainly, but it struck him as wasteful, and in a measure unfair, to make an Australian pay extravagantly for desiring to live in the mother-land. Then, after assisting to enlarge the empire abroad, the price of landed estates in England had gone down seriously—was, indeed, going down still. With a probability of a serious fall in values in both hemispheres, it was better to part with his English investment while he could get a purchaser for it, who, like himself, was not disposed to stand upon trifles.

So it came to pass that, after a conference between his own and the Massinger solicitors, Mr. Lexington accepted the proposal to sell Massinger Court, with the Hereford herd of high-bred cattle, hacks, hunters, carriage-horses, vehicles, saddlery—indeed, everything just as it stood. All these adjuncts to be taken at a valuation, and added to the price of the estate, the re-purchase of which by a member of the family was what most probably, though his solicitor declined to say, old Mr. Hamon de Massinger, the testator, had in view all along.

The county was ridiculously overjoyed, as some acidulated person said, that the rightful heir, so to speak, was come to his own again. Independently of such feeling, nowhere stronger than in English county society, few localities but would feel a certain satisfaction at the return of a county magnate—rich, unmarried, and distinguished, as a man must always

be who has fought England's battles abroad, and shed his blood in upholding her honour. Thus, although the free-handed and unaffected Australian family was heartily regretted, and "farewelled" with suitable honours, the sentimental corner in all hearts responded fervently to the news that the young squire had returned to the home of his ancestors, and would henceforth, as he declared at the tenants' enthusiastically joyous reception, live among his own people.

Of course, all sorts of exaggerated versions of his life in the far South prevailed. These comprised prowess in war, hair-breadth escapes, wounds, and captivity, the whole rounded off with a legend of a beautiful native princess, who had brought him as her dower a principality beneath the Southern Cross. To these romantic rumours he paid no attention whatever, refusing to be drawn, and giving the most cursory answers to direct questions. But when, after spending a quiet year on his estate, in the management of which he took great interest, it was announced that he was about to be married to the beautiful, distinguished, fascinating, eccentric Hypatia Tollemache, all the county was wildly excited. When the event took place, the particulars of the quiet wedding were read and re-read by every one in his own and the adjacent counties.

Fresh tales and legends, however, continued to be circulated. His first wife—for he had married a beautiful Maori princess; at any rate, a chief's daughter—was killed fighting by his side in a tribal war. She was jealous of Miss Tollemache, and had committed suicide. Not at all. Her father, a great war-chief, disapproved of the union, and,

carrying her off, had immured her in his stronghold, surrounded by a lake, which her despairing husband could not cross. So she pined away and died. *That* was the reason for his occasional fits of depression, and his insensibility to the charms of the local belles.

He was obdurate with respect to giving information as to the truth or otherwise of these interesting narratives; indeed, so obviously unwilling to gratify even the most natural curiosity, that at length even the most hardened inquisitor gave up the task in despair.

The county had more reason for complaint when it was further announced that Sir Roland and his bride had left for the Continent immediately after the wedding, whence they did not propose returning until the near approach of Christmas-tide. Then such old-world festivities as were still remembered by the villagers in connection with former lords of the manor would be conscientiously kept up, while the largesse to the poor, which under the new *régime* had not by any means fallen into disuse, would be disbursed with exceptional profusion.

After the sale Mr. Lexington had been besought to consult his own convenience, absolutely and unreservedly, as to the time and manner of his departure. The purchase-money having been received, and all legal forms completed, he was to consider the house and all things appertaining thereto at his service. Messrs. Nourse and Lympett had instructions to take delivery of the estate whenever it suited him to vacate it. The Australian gentleman, having had much experience in the sale and taking over of "stations" in Australia—always regarded as a crucial test of liberality—was heard to declare that never in his life had he

purchased and resold so extensive a property with so little trouble, or concluded so considerable a transaction with less friction or misunderstanding on either side.

And so, when the leaves in the woods around the Chase had fallen, and the ancient oaks and elms were arrayed in all their frost and snow jewellery, word came that the squire with his bride were returning from their extended tour. They would arrive on a certain day, prepared to inhabit the old hall which had sheltered in pride and power so many generations of the race. Then the whole county went off its head, and prepared for his home-coming. Such a demonstration had not been heard of since Sir Hugo de Massinger, constable of Chester, came home from the wars in Wales after the death of Gwenwyn.

When the train drew up to the platform, such a crowd was there that Hypatia looked forth with amazement, wondering whether there was a contested election, with the chairing of the successful candidate imminent. Every man of note in the county was there, from the Duke of Dunstanburgh to the last created knight. Every tenant, every villager, with their wives and daughters, sons and visitors; every tradesman—in fact, every soul within walking, riding, or driving distance—had turned up to do honour to Sir Roland of the Court, who, after adventures by sea and land, through war and bloodshed, had been suffered, doubtless by the direct interposition of Providence, to come to his own again.

As Sir Roland and his fair dame passed through the crowd towards their chariot, it was quickly understood what was to be the order of the day. The horses were taken out, and a dozen willing hands

grasped the pole, preparatory to setting forth for the Court, some three miles distant. Waving his hand to request silence, the bridegroom said—

"My lord duke, ladies and gentlemen, and you my good friends, who have known me from childhood, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for the welcome which you have given to me and my dear wife on our return to our native country and the home of my ancestors. My wife would thank you on her part, if her heart was not too full. We trust that in the future we may show by our lives, lived among you, how deeply, how intensely, we appreciate your generous welcome. At present I can say nothing more, than to invite you, one and all, to accompany us to the Court, to do us the honour to accept the first hospitality we have been in a position to offer since I left England."

Due notice had been given. Preparations had been made on a scale of unprecedented magnitude. A partial surprise awaited the wedded pair as the carriage passed through the massive gates, above which the triumphal arch seemed to have levied contributions on half the evergreens in the park. The heraldic beasts, each "a demi-Pegasus quarterly or in gules," on the moss-grown pillars, were garlanded with hot-house flowers, as also with the holly-bush and berries appropriate to the season. Marquees had been erected on the lawns, where all manner of meats, from the lordly baron of beef to the humbler flitch of bacon, were exhibited in such profusion as might lead to the inference that a regiment had been billeted on the village. It would not have been for the first time. Cromwell's Ironsides *had*, indeed, tried demi-saker,

arblast, and culverin on the massive walls of the old hall, without, however, much decisive effect. Hogsheads of ale were there more than sufficient to wash down the solid fare, for which the keen bright atmosphere furnished suitable appetites.

The nobility and gentry were entertained in the great dining-hall, where a *déjeuner* had been prepared, thoroughly up to date, abounding in all modern requirements. Champagne and claret flowed in perennial abundance. The plate, both silver and gold, heirlooms of the ancient house, had been brought back from their resting-places. It was evident that the whole thing—the cuisinerie, the decorations, the waiters, the fruit, and flowers—had been sent down from London days before ; and as Sir Roland and Hypatia took their places at the head of the table, mirth and joyous converse commenced to ripple and flow ceaselessly. Even the ancestral portraits seemed to have acquired a glow of gratification as the lovely and the brave, the gallant courtiers or the grim warriors, looked down upon their descendant and his bride ; on those fortunate ones so lately restored to the pride and power of their position—so lately in peril of losing these historic possessions, and their lives at the same time.

Did Hypatia, as an expression of thoughtful retrospection shaded her countenance momentarily, recall another scene, scarcely two years since, when the bridegroom, now rejoicing in the pride of manhood, lay wounded, and a captive, helplessly awaiting an agonizing death ; herself in the power of maddened savages, as was Cyril Summers with his wife and children ? Then the miraculous interposition—the fierce Ropata sweeping away the rebel fanatics, with the fire of his

wrath! And she—alas! the faithful, the devoted Erena, but for whose sacrificial tenderness Sir Roland would not have been by her side to-day! What was she, Hypatia, more than others, that such things should have been done for her? The tears *would* rise to her eyes, in spite of her efforts to compose her countenance, as she looked on the joyous faces around. Mary Summers and her husband sat in calm enjoyment of the scene. Then, with a heartfelt inward prayer to Him who had so disposed their fortunes to this happy ending, she strove to mould her feelings to a mood more in accordance with her present surroundings.

A change in the proceedings was at hand. The Duke of Dunstanburgh, rising, besought his good friends and neighbours to charge their glasses, and to bear with him for a few moments, while he proposed a toast which doubtless they had all anticipated.

His young friend, as he was proud to call him, whose father he had known and loved, had this day been restored to the seat of his ancestors, to the ancient home of the De Massingers in their county. He would but touch lightly on his adventures, by flood and field, in that far land, to which he had elected to find—er—an—outlet for his energy. Danger had there been, as they all knew. Blood had been shed. The lives of himself and his lovely bride, who now shed lustre upon their gathering, had trembled in the balance, when by an almost miraculous interposition succour arrived. He would not pursue the subject, with which painful memories were interwoven. Enough to state that under all circumstances, even the most desperate, Sir Roland had maintained the honour of England, and had shed

his blood freely in defence of her time-honoured institutions. (Tremendous cheering.) He had returned, thank God! he would say in all sincerity, and was now, with his bride, a lady who in all respects would do honour to the county and the kingdom, placed in possession of the hall of his ancestors. He was come —they had his assurance—prepared to live and die among them; among the friends of his youth, and those older neighbours who, like the speaker, had hunted and fished and shot with his father before him. He was proud this day to give them the toast of Sir Roland and Lady de Massinger—to wish them long life and prosperity—and he was sure he might add, in the name of the whole county, to welcome them most heartily to their home.

When the cheering had subsided, taken up again and again, as it was from the outer hall and even from the lawn, by the tenants and villagers, who, if they could not see, could at least judge by the storm of voices as to the nature of the address which had called it forth, Sir Roland stood up and faced the crowd of guests, who cheered again and again as though they never intended to stop. He commenced with studied calmness, thanking them all, his good friends and neighbours, the old friends of the house, and those among whom he had lived so long in friendship, he might say affectionate intimacy, until circumstances, apparently, made it necessary for him to leave the home of his childhood. They would doubtless appreciate the greatness of the sacrifice, the bitterness of feeling, with which he quitted the home of his race. He resolved to go as far as was possible from home and its memories, and had, in fact, gone so far South

that the Pole only would have been the next abiding-place. It was a British outpost, however, well deserving the name of the Britain of the South; destined in years to come to be the home, the prosperous home, of millions of the men of our race, and one of the brightest jewels in the Imperial crown. Difficulties had arisen with the Maori nation, a proud, a brave, a highly intelligent people, who had made the best defence in war against British regulars by an aboriginal race since the days when the stub-born valour of the ancient Britons scarce yielded to the legionaries of Rome. (Tremendous cheering.) That war, fraught with disastrous losses in men and officers to Britain's bravest regiments, was now over, he was rejoiced to say. There might be irregular fighting from time to time, but the high chiefs had surrendered, and vast areas of the most fertile land in the world had now become the property of the Crown. He himself held what might be considered an incredibly large domain, which must prove of great value in time to come. He would not mention the number of acres. He was *not* going back there. (Redoubled cheering.) He could assure them of that fact, though in days to come another Massinger Court might arise beneath the Southern Cross. (Renewed cheering.) He was as fixed here, under Providence (he told them now), as the "King's Oak" in the Chase. (Loud and prolonged cheering.) He and his wife had experienced a sufficiency of adven-ture, by land and sea, to last them for their natural lives. They desired, in all humility, to return heartfelt thanks to Almighty God for their restoration to this pleasant home, and those dear friends whom at one

time they never thought to see again. They hoped to prove their gratitude, by lives of usefulness in their day and generation.

* * * * * *

The adventures of Sir Roland de Massinger and Hypatia his wife, insomuch as regards peril and uncertainty of war or peace, travel by land and sea, or even the stormy politics of a new nation, must be said now to have lost much of their interest. Henceforth Sir Roland was contented to pursue the ordinary course of the country gentleman of England, which, if not exciting or adventurous, is surely one of the happiest lives in the world. He was contented to manage his New Zealand property through an agent. Indeed, after Mr. Slyde's appearance in England—that gentleman having received a year's leave of absence, on account of his wound and eminent services in the war—he was pleased to place the whole management of Waikato Court and Chase, near the flourishing township of Chesterfield, in his hands. Mr. Slyde was about to relinquish his connection with the New Zealand Land Company, having, as he said with his customary cynicism, been fool enough to encumber himself with a picturesque and fertile block of land, on the same river, and also to commit the crowning folly of matrimony with a young lady to whom he had become engaged just after the war. New Zealand was bad enough, he averred, but for a man who had been born without the proverbial silver spoon, England was the worst country in the civilized world. Therefore, if his comrade, Sir Roland, had sufficient faith in his intelligence and honesty—rather rare endowments in a colony—he supposed he could manage

both properties with much the same outlay of cash and industry as his own.

The arrangement was completed, and worked so satisfactorily, that for many a year Sir Roland had no duties connected with the antipodean estates beyond supervising the sale of wool, frozen mutton, butter, cheese, cocksfoot grass seed, and other annual products, which so excited the admiration of his neighbours and tenants that they could hardly be made to believe that such satisfactory samples could be produced out of England, his frozen lamb, equal to "prime Canterbury," notwithstanding.

Hypatia is truly happy in her home—blessed with a growing family, contented with her duties as the wife of a county member, and, above all, firmly convinced that Roland was the only man she had ever loved. She is almost convinced, as her outspoken friend Mrs. Merivale (*née* Branksome) often assured her, that it served her right for her absurdly altruistic notions and general perversity that she so nearly lost him. The days are only too short for her employments and enjoyments. Nor did she abandon the philanthropical obligation, but as the kindly, generous, and capable Lady Bountiful of the estate, is "earthlier happy as the rose distilled" than in any imaginable state of "single blessedness," however advanced and politically eminent.

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